

Ex Libris - Martin Coule

4520. dd

A
SUCCINCT ACCOUNT
OF ALL THE
RELIGIONS,
AND VARIOUS
SECTS IN RELIGION,
That have prevailed in the World,
IN ALL NATIONS AND ALL AGES,
From the earliest Account of Time to the present Period.

12

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

FOR THE

RECEIPT



FOR THE

RECEIPT

IN ALL MANNER AND ALL AGES

4

A
SUCCINCT ACCOUNT
 OF ALL THE
R E L I G I O N S,
 AND VARIOUS
SECTS IN RELIGION,

That have prevailed in the World,
 IN ALL NATIONS, AND IN ALL AGES,
 From the earliest Account of Time, to the present Period, from the
 most indisputable Tradition;

SHEWING SOME OF THEIR GROSS ABSURDITIES,
 SHOCKING IMPIETIES,
 AND RIDICULOUS INCONSISTENCES;

EXTRACTED

From ANCIENT and MODERN HISTORY,
 And some of the most Illustrious Philosophers :

SUCH AS

HERODOTUS,
 EUSEBIUS,
 LIVY,

PLINY,
 PLUTARCH,
 JOSEPHUS,

SIR ISAAC NEWTON,
 MR. LOCKE,
 &c. &c. &c.

WITH A COPIOUS INDEX.

A History so replete with an almost incredible diversity of Sentiments
 and Opinions, as cannot fail to excite in the Mind Wonder and
 Astonishment, while it affords a no less pleasing Entertainment.

BY WILLIAM HECKFORD, Esq.

And if it seem Evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom
 you will serve, whether the Gods which your Fathers served, that were on
 the other Side of the Flood, or the Gods of the Amorites, in whose Land ye
 dwell : but as for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.

JOSHUA, ch. xxiv. ver. 15.

Fear God and keep his Commandments : for this is the whole Duty of Man.
 ECCLESIASTES, ch. xii. ver. 13.

L O N D O N :
 PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,
 AT THE
 Minerva Press,
 LEADENHALL STREET,
 M DCC XCI.

P R E F A C E.

HISTORY is generally allowed by all distinguished writers, to be the most instructing and useful branch of literature, and as no work of this kind (divested of all extraneous matter) has ever appeared in this shape, it cannot fail to render the ensuing pages entertaining to a curious and inquisitive mind, and needs little further apology to the reader.

The many glaring absurdities, and shocking impieties, to be met with in the course

of the following history, among the ancient Sects in Religion, in distant and remote parts of the world, among the rude Barbarians, in that dark and unenlightened age, when a blind ignorance prevailed in their untutored mind, joined with a mixture of enthusiasm and superstition, involved in idolatry, wickedness, and immorality, the natural consequence of that ignorance which then overspread the face of the earth. It is less (I say) to be wondered at, when we read in history of whole nations degrading human nature into that of beasts. The Cynics laying aside all the natural restraints of shame and modesty, commit their unnatural lusts openly. *One of our greatest philosophers maintaining the doctrine of men having their wives in common; and † another teaching the worst of incest, that of fathers with their daughters, and the Stoicks affirming that no word or speech of any kind, ought to be censured or

* Plato.

† Chrysippus.

avoided

avoided as filthy or obscene. And † another great writer tells us of the philosophers of his time : that the most notorious vices were screened under the specious vail of religion, and that they did not labour to maintain the character of philosophers, by any virtuous actions, or modest deportment, but concealed their vicious lives, under an austere countenance, and a habit different from the rest of the world.

It may not be amiss, by way of preface, to take a summary view, in a most concise manner, of all the prevailing religions in the *world*, which, in the ensuing pages, are so accurately delineated, and which constitute the subject of the following work. In order to which I shall divide them into four parts, and speak first of

EUROPE.

IN Great Britain and Ireland, and the

2 2

territories

† Quintillian.

territories thereunto belonging, the Reformed Religion is universally established, and in England and Ireland, the Episcopal government is observed; but in Scotland, Presbytery; though in all, there is the indulgence of other persuasions publicly allowed. The Inquisition has so great an influence in Italy, and those Isles, that no Heretics are publicly allowed to dwell there, and all of them are called so, who disown the Pope for their head, and refuse to submit to all the superstitions of the church of Rome; only some Jews are tolerated, and for which they pay a tribute to the Pope, throughout the ecclesiastical territories; the Venetians tolerate no Jews; in Naples, a few professors of the religion of the Greek church are allowed: Sicily, Sardinia, and Malta, permit no profession but that of the Roman Catholics: Dalmatia is partly possessed by the Venetians, and partly by the Turks: the Republic of Ragusa pay tribute

to the Turks, but are of the Romish church, and have an archbishop of their own: the Islanders of Corfu, though subject to the Venetians, are of the Greek church: the isle of Candia is under the dominion of the Turks, but besides Mahometans, there are Roman Catholics, Greeks, and Jews, who pay tribute for their liberty. In Spain and Portugal the Inquisition is so rigid, that none but Romanists are tolerated. In France they are universally Romanists, and also in all those parts of the Netherlands that belong to France or Spain. In the states of Holland, the Reformed Religion, following Calvin, is most universal, though all other opinions are tolerated, whether, Jews, Papists, or Lutherans, only the Papists are not allowed the open and public exercise of their religion, but the others are allowed to build synagogues, churches, &c. At Geneva the Reformed Religion is general. Of the Thirteen Swiss Cantons, five are Romanists, the

wonder

others either Calvinists or Zuinglians, and in most a mixture of Romanists and Reformed. Germany has almost as many professors as there are princes, states, and free cities; but the Emperor is a Roman Catholic, but Lutheranism is most countenanced by authority: Calvinism is the most professed in the Palatinates, in the country of Hesse, the dutchy of Wirtembourg, and the Hans towns; Hungary is partly Roman Catholics, and partly Lutherans, and a great number of Arians: Poland is generally Catholics, excepting in Lower Poland, where there are some Protestants: and in the provinces bordering upon Hungary, Moravia, and Silesia, and those advancing towards the south and Levant, are generally of the Greek church: Transilvania has all sorts, but fewest of the Romanists: Swedeland and Denmark are commonly stiled Lutherans. The Muscovites follow the Greek church, and though they have a patriarch at Moscow, yet they

acknowledge the church of Constantinople; those upon the frontiers of Muscovy circumcise like the Jews and Turks, though in other circumstances they are not of their religion, nor are they professed Christians or idolaters, but live according to the laws of nature, and worship one God, Creator of the World. Crim Tartary professes Mahometanism, there are also among them, some Jews and Roman Catholics, to whom they give toleration, upon their paying tribute. Turkey generally professes Mahometanism, but Jews and Christians are tolerated in many places, particularly those of the Greek church, who have a patriarch at Constantinople.

I now proceed regularly to

A S I A.

IN Turkish Asia Mahometanism is uppermost, though other opinions are tolerated;
the

the Greeks have two patriarchs here, one at Antioch, the other at Jerusalem; in this empire principally are those called Arminians, Georgians, Nestorians, Jacobites, and Maronites (all treated of hereafter), there are also some Roman Catholics, Sabeans, Coptes, and a great number of Jews; the Roman Catholics are for the most part French and Venetian merchants, who are assisted by the Franciscan monks, whose common residence is at Jerusalem and Bethlehem. In Persia, Mahometanism, according to the Sect of Ali, is the national religion, but all strangers have liberty of conscience: so that there are all sorts of Christians, Jews, Bannions, and other idolaters. Arabia is subject to the Grand Signior, and Mahometan princes, who permit Christians to live there, who have built a famous monastery upon Mount Sinai, possessed by the religious Greeks of the order of St. Basil. The empire of Mogul, in India, is subject to a Mahometan

hometan prince, of the sect of Ali : In this dominion there are many idolatrous heathens, and also some Roman Catholics, Jews, and Abyssines, all nations and opinions being tolerated. The Peninsula of Indies on this side the gulf of Bengal, comprehends many kingdoms, but most of them heathen idolaters : but the island of Goa, belongs to the Portuguese, who have divers churches and monasteries in it : the archbishop of this isle hath under him all the bishops of the East Indies, and here the Inquisition exercises its tyranny against all that they call apostates : but Arminians, Jews, Moors, and Banyans, are suffered to live there, according to their religion, besides Arabs, Persians, and Abyssines, who partly follow Christianity, and partly the Moorish Mahometanism, the people of Calecut generally believe in God. The kingdom of Narfingua practises the same superstitions, and have abundance of Pagods and Temples built in honour of their
demons ;

demons; the king of Golconda follows the religion of the Persians, but the people are gross idolaters: the main land of India, beyond the Ganges, is possessed by divers idolatrous princes: the peninsula of the same Indus, on the east side of the gulf, is also a country where they worship idols and false gods. The king of Siam permits the exercise of all sorts of religion, and shews particular marks of esteem to Christianity: The peninsula of Melaca is dependant upon Siam, but the greatest part of it is possessed by the Hollanders, who grant liberty of conscience to all merchants trading among them: there are many Roman Catholics in the kingdom of Tonquin and Lao, where the Jesuits preach: the people of Pegu are so addicted to idolatry, that all attempts of converting them to Christianity have hitherto proved fruitless: the Chinese are idolaters, but Christianity is tolerated among them, and the Jesuits have divers churches there: there are
also

also a great number of Jews, who have their synagogues by the permission of the emperor of China : Tartary is subject to divers princes, the chief of whom is the great Cham, some of the sovereigns are Mahometans, others are Pagans and Idolaters : There are also Nestorians and Jews, but such as observe but little of the law of Moses ; idolatry reigns in Japan, and since the persecution in 1630, the Christians have had no church in that country, though they formerly had ; the Phillipine islands belong to the king of Spain, who gives liberty of conscience to all those of the country, who are idolaters, and to divers Indian Chineses. The islands of Java and Sumatra, are inhabited by people addicted to idolatry ; there are also mixed with them Mahometans and Christians. The Hollanders are very potent in the isle of Java, wherein they have Batavia ; the natives of Ceylon are idolaters, but there are many Mahometans and Christians among them ; the Dutch
possessing

possessing many cities there; the isle of Cyprus is under the dominion of the Turks, but both the Latin and Greek Christians live there without molestation, as do also the Arminians, Coptes, and all sorts of sects, paying only a tribute for their liberty.

The next quarter of the world is

A F R I C A.

THE people of Nabia have a mixture of the Christian ceremonies, with those of Judaism and Mahometanism. The Abyssines are the purest of all the Oriental Christians; Heathen Idolatry is the ancient religion of Monomotapa, but the Jesuits have introduced Christianity in many places. Barbary is inhabited by Moors, Turks, and Arabs, who are Mahometans; some places are possessed by the English, Spaniards, and Portuguese: there are some towns where the

infidels

infidels suffer the Christians and Jews the exercise of their religion upon paying tribute. The chief religion of Egypt is the Mahometan, observed by the Turks, Moors, and Arabs (as it is accurately described in the following work). The Christian Coptes have their churches, and the Jews their synagogues; the people of Zanguebar, and on the coast of Abex are Mahometans: but the Portuguese, who have some places in Zanguebar, have there introduced Christianity: there are also Jews and Idolaters, the natives of the isle of Madagascar believe there is one God, creator of heaven and earth, but they also worship an evil spirit. The French who are established there, endeavour to bring them over to Christianity; Cafraria is peopled with idolaters, the Hollanders having only two forts towards the Cape of Good Hope, and the Portuguese, a castle in the kingdom of Sophala; there are many idolaters in the kingdom of Congo, some Mahometans,

hometans, and divers Christians, particularly in the province of Angola, of which the Portuguese are masters. The Guineans worship idols, but the English, Hollanders, and Danes, possess some places upon that coast, and the Portuguese have habitations in the country, where they endeavour to introduce christianity. The negroes mix with their idolatry some ceremonies of Mahometanism. The last I have to speak of are the prevailing religions in America, before our unhappy divisions and fatal separation.

A M E R I C A.

CANADA, or new France, is peopled with Roman Catholics, the greatest part of the country, being subject to the king of France: New England, New Holland, and New Swedeland, are colonies of the respective nations whose name they bear, and profess their own religion. The savages have
scarce

scarce any religion at all, except those who converse with the Europeans: the English have divers places in Virginia; the natives believe there are many Gods of different orders, who depend upon one chief, who is their sovereign, and hath been so from eternity; they esteem the sun, moon, and stars, as demi gods: the Salvages of Florida are idolaters, and worship the sun and moon, but the Spaniards and English having several colonies there, have introduced Christianity in many places: Mexico or New Spain, is well peopled with Roman Catholics, where there is an archbishop, and divers bishops; the Spaniards are also masters of New Castile, where they have introduced the Popish religion: the Mountaineers of this country are still idolaters, worshipping the sun and moon as their principal divinities, supposing them to be man and wife: the Caribbee islands, and natives of Guinea, adore idols, and some among them believe the immortality of
the

the soul; the inhabitants of the country of the Amazons are idolaters, but the Portuguese have a fine city there, called San Salvadore, where is an archbishop's see; the Salvages are daily converted to Christianity.

The Spaniards have divers places there, and a town called L'Assumption, which is both a bishop's see, and has also a college of Jesuits: there are several seminaries established on purpose to convert those natives, who of themselves have little or no religion. The Roman Catholic religion is established in Peru, which belongs to the king of Spain: there is an archbishop at Lyma, so that idolatry is almost rooted out from among the natives of America.

To conclude—The author, or editor, (call him which you please) of the following work, claims little more merit than what is derived from a general reading, and is the fruit plucked from every branch of history, ancient and modern.

6 NO 61

I N T R O.

INTRODUCTION,

IN WHICH ARE INTERSPERSED

SOME BEAUTIFUL EXTRACTS

FROM

Sir Isaac Newton, Mr. Locke, and other illustrious Philosophers.

GOD, says the Holy Apostle St. John, * is
a Spirit, and they that worship him, must
worship him in Spirit and in Truth. To
define him agreeable to the sentiments of Sir
Isaac Newton, Mr. Locke, and other dis-
tinguished

* St. John, chap. iv. ver. 24.

tinguished philosophers. He is eternal and infinite, omnipotent and omniscient ; that is, he endures from eternity to eternity, and is present from infinity to infinity. He governs all things that exist, and knows all things. He is not eternity, or infinity, but eternal and infinite. He is not duration and space, but he endures and is present, he endures always, and is present every where, constitutes the very things we call duration and space, eternity and infinity. He is omnipresent, not only virtually so, but substantially : for power without substance cannot subsist. We know him only by his properties or attributes, by the most wise and excellent structure of things, and by final causes : but we adore and worship him, on account of his dominion over us. The admirable and beautiful structure of things, for final causes exalt our ideas of the contriver : the unity of the design shews him to be one. The great motions in the system performed
with

with the same facility as the least, suggest his Almighty power, which gave motion to the earth, and the celestial bodies with equal ease as to the minutest particles. The simplicity of the laws that prevail in the world, the excellent disposition of things, in order to obtain the best ends, and the beauty that adorns the works of nature, far superior to any thing in art, suggest his consummate wisdom. The usefulness of the whole scheme so well contrived, for the intelligent beings that enjoy it, with the internal dispositions, and moral structure of those beings themselves, shews his unbounded goodness. He is not the object of sense; his essence, and indeed that of all other substances, is beyond the reach of our discoveries, but his attributes clearly appear in his admirable works. We know that the highest conceptions we are able to form of them, are still beneath his real perfections: but his power and dominion over us, and our duty to him are ma-

nifest: His attributes may puzzle our understanding, without shaking our faith.

Whatever God has revealed is certainly true, consequently whatever is divine revelation, says an ingenious writer, * ought to over-rule all our opinions, prejudices, and interests, and has a right to be received with full assent: and such a submission as this of our *reason* to *faith*, takes not away the landmarks of knowledge. The grounds of a rational faith, says the same learned author, are, first, that the things revealed are not contrary to, though they may be above natural reason. Secondly, That the revealer be well acquainted with the things he reveals. Thirdly, That he be above all suspicion of deceiving us. Where these criterions are found, no reasonable person will deny his assent; thus, we may as well doubt of our existence, as of the truth of a revelation coming from God, who, can neither be de-
ceived

* Locke on Human Understanding.

ceived himself, nor deceive others, by proposing things to be believed, that are contradictory to the faculties he has given us. Whatever propositions therefore are beyond reason, but not contrary to it, are, when revealed, the proper matter of faith.

I proceed now to the worship and homage, which is due to the Supreme Being, considered as our creator, preserver, and most bountiful benefactor; and shall make use of the arguments laid down by the aforementioned great philosophers.

As our affections depend on our opinions of their objects, it seems to be among the first duties we owe to the author of our Being, to form the least imperfect, since we cannot form perfect, conceptions of his character and administration: for such conceptions will render our religion rational, and our dispositions refined. If our opinions are diminutive

tive and distorted, our religion will be superstitious, and our temper abject. Thus if we ascribe to the Deity that false majesty which consists in the unbenevolent and swollen exercise of mere will or power, or suppose him to delight in the prostrations of servile fear, or as servile praise, he will be worshipped with mean adulation, and a profusion of compliments. If he be looked upon as a stern, and implacable Being, delighting in vengeance, he will be adored with pompous offerings, or whatever else may be thought proper to sooth and mollify him: But if we believe perfect goodness to be the character of the Supreme Being, and that he loves those who resemble him most, in this, the most amiable of his attributes, the worship paid him will be rational and sublime, and his worshippers will seek to please him, by imitating that goodness which they adore. Indeed, wherever right conceptions of the Deity and his Providence prevail, when he

is

is considered as the inexhausted source of light and love, and joy, as acting in the joint character of a father and governor, what veneration and gratitude must such conceptions, thoroughly believed, excite in the mind? How natural and delightful must it be to one whose heart is open to the perception of truth, and of every thing fair, great, and wonderful in nature, to engage in the exercises of religion, and to contemplate and adore him for his wonderful wisdom, power, and goodness. When we consider the unfullied purity, and absolute perfection of the divine nature, and reflect on the imperfection and various blemishes of our own, and the ungrateful returns we have made to his goodness, we must sink into the deepest humility and prostration of soul before him, and be conscious, that it is our duty to repent of a temper and conduct so unworthy of our nature, and so unbecoming our obligations to its author; and resolve to endeavour to act a wiser and better part for the future. And if
the

the Deity is considered as the father of mercies, who loves his creatures with infinite tenderness, and in a particular manner all good men: nay, who delights in goodness, even in its most imperfect degrees: what resignation, what dependance, what generous confidence, what hope in God, and in his all-wise providence, must arise in the soul that is possessed of such amiable views of him. It is therefore our duty, as well as our highest interest, often, at stated times, and by decent and solemn acts, to adore the great original of our existence, to express our veneration and love, by a devout acknowledgment of his perfections, and to shew our gratitude, by praising his goodness, and gratefully confessing his benefits. We ought to acknowledge our dependance upon God, our trust in his mercy and forgiveness, and our resignation to the disposal of his providence, and this not only in private but in public worship.

6 NO 61

OF THE SEVERAL

RELIGIONS;

LIKEWISE

A SUCCINCT ACCOUNT

OF THE DIFFERENT

SECTS IN RELIGION,

AMONG THE ANCIENTS.

SECTION I.

I. *The Religion of the Egyptians.*

THERE are few nations in the world which can pretend to an equal antiquity with the Egyptians. Their country is the only one in the world which has borne the name of a son of Noah. And yet the

Year of the
flood 352—
before Christ
1996.

B

Egypt-

Year of the
flood 352—
before Christ
1996.

Egyptians themselves, ignorant of their true descent, pretended even to a greater antiquity, asserting themselves to have been the first men in the world, who (as well as animals) they imagined must have been originally produced in their country, rather than in any other part of the world, because of the benign temperature of the air, the natural fecundity of the Nile, and its spontaneous bringing forth several kinds of vegetables, as proper food for the newly produced men and animals *. As much as the Egyptians seemed to excel other nations in the wisdom of their laws and constitutions, they yet surpassed them more in bigotry and superstition.

Idolatry was so antient among them, that the Grecians confessed they borrowed not only their religious ceremonies, but the names of almost all their Gods from Egypt. For the Egyptians are said to have been the first people who erected altars, images, and temples, and the first inventors of festivals, ceremonies, and transactions with the Gods, by

* Pliny's Natural History, book x. chap. 65.

by the mediation of others ; and also to have first given names to the twelve Gods.

Year of the
flood, 352—
before Christ
1996.

* They had a great many deities of different ranks and orders. Those who were chiefly honoured in Egypt, were *Osiris* and *Isis*, by which it is most probable they originally meant the *sun* and the *moon*, whose influences governed and preserved the world; those two planets being reckoned by them, the great causes of nutrition and generation, and as it were, the sources from whence the other parts of nature, which also they looked upon as Gods, and to which they gave distinct names, were derived. These were Jupiter, or spirit, the vis vivica of living creatures ; Vulcan, or fire ; Ceres, or the earth ; Oceanus, (by which the Egyptians meant their Nile) or moisture ; and Minerva, or air.

Besides these celestial or eternal Gods, they had also terrestrial and mortal deities, which had merited the honours paid them, by the benefits they conferred on mankind

B 2

in

• Pliny's Natural History, book x. chap. 66.

Year of the
flood 352—
before Christ
1996.

in their life time, several of them having been kings of Egypt: some of these bore the same names with the celestial Gods, and others had proper names of their own; such were the Sun, Chronus or Saturn, Rhea, Jupiter, (called by them Ammon) Juno, Vulcan, Vesta, Hermes or Mercury, Orus, Venus, Pan, and others. Serapis is said to have been an upstart deity, introduced by one of the Ptolemies at Alexandria: but others suppose that to be only another name for Osiris, who was also called Bacchus. As Osiris was supposed to have been of a good and beneficent nature, so his brother Typhon was esteemed the reverse, and held in universal detestation, for the evils brought by him on his family and nation. Though the bodies of these mortal deities remained in their sepulchres on earth, yet they believed their souls shone in the stars in heaven; the soul of Isis in particular in the dog star, called by them Sothis; the soul of Orus in Orion; and that of Typhon in the bear *

Notwithstanding this polytheism of the Egyptians, they are said, in reality, to have
acknow-

* Plutarch, page 362.

acknowledged one supreme God, the maker and ruler of the world, whom they sometimes denoted by the name of Osiris or Serapis, sometimes by that of Isis, and at other times by that of Neith, on whose temple at Sais was the following remarkable inscription:

Year of the
flood 352—
before Christ
1996.

*' I am all that hath been, is, and shall be, and my veil
hath no mortal yet uncovered *.'*

There is also an inscription to Isis, still remaining at Capua, to this effect.

*' To thee, who, being one, art all things, the goddess of
Isis.'*

The inhabitants of Thebais, are reported to have worshipped only the immortal and unbegotten God Cneph, or Emeph; for which reason they were exempt from all contributions towards the maintenance of the sacred animals which were worshipped in the lower Egypt †.

From this God Cneph, they supposed a secondary God proceeded, representing the world, and was called Phtha, which word is

B 3

at

* Plutarch, page 354.

† Idem, page 359.

Year of the
flood 352—
before Christ
1996.

at present used among the Copts, to signify the divine being.

However the idolatrous humour, which prevailed at first, perhaps only in some parts of Egypt, appears at length to have entirely over-run it, and, what seems scarcely credible, they came at length to bestow divine honours on several animals, nay even on vegetables; as leeks and onions; and that with so great variety and disagreement among themselves, that, except some of the principal Gods, who were honoured all over the kingdom, the worship of every deity was confined to one or two cities or provinces; whence it come to pass, that a great number of the chief cities of Egypt, were by the Grecians named after the Gods or animals that were worshipped there: as Diospolis, or the city of Jupiter, Heliopolis, or the city of the sun; and in the same manner, others bore the names of Pan, Apollo, Latona, Hermes, Hercules, and Venus, and also of the dog, the lion, the wolfe, the crocodile, &c.

This diversity of worship was sometimes attended with very ill consequences, especially if their deities happened to be such as were naturally enemies to one another; the inhabitants of one place, often paying their adoration to that kind of animals which were held in the greatest abhorrence by their neighbours. Hence proceeded inveterate quarrels and dangerous wars; as happened in particular between those of Heracleopolis who worshipped the Ichneumon, and those of Arfinoe, who worshipped the crocodile; and to mention no more between the cities of Oxyrynchus and Cynopolis, the former of which sacrificed and eat dogs, the deity of the latter, in revenge for their eating that sort of fish which was the object of their own worship*. It was thought, however, that the kings themselves, out of policy, first occasioned, or at least encouraged and fomented these dissensions, to divert the people from attempting any thing against the state; for Diodorus tells us that one of their first and most prudent kings finding the Egyptians very prone to sedition, enjoined to each province the worship of some particular animal; different from

Year of the
flood 352,—
before Christ
1996.

B 4

all

* Plutarch, page 380.

Year of the
flood 352—
before Christ
1996.

all the rest, and likewise to use a different diet; so that the Egyptians, being by this means divided into so many distinct societies, prejudiced against each other in religious matters, and mutually despising one another, on account of their different customs, in the ordinary affairs of life, there was no likelihood of their ever uniting again *

It would be rather tedious than entertaining to set down all the fables and uncertain traditions which might be found in antient authors, concerning the Egyptian Gods, or the images by which they represented those deities that were most peculiar to this nation, likewise their sacrifices, festivals, and religious ceremonies †.

* Diodorus, page 80.

† Plutarch, page 371.

No. II.

The Religion of the Moabites.

WE are but little acquainted with the customs and manners of the Moabites. They were governed by kings, used circumcision*, and seemed to have employed themselves mostly in pasturage, and breeding cattle, wherein their riches chiefly consisted. They were one of the nations whose good the Jews were forbidden to seek, nor were they to be admitted to intermarry with the Israelites to the tenth generation †. However, they appear to have cultivated a good understanding with that people, after their settlement in Canaan, as appears from the sojourning of Elimelech there ‡, and the reception David met with in his troubles at Mizpeh §. What language

Year of the
flood 2016,
before Christ
332.

* Deut. chap. xxii. ver. 3. 6. † Ibid. ver. 3. ‡ Numb. xxv. ver. 11.

§ 1 Sam. chap. xxii. ver. 3, &c.—Numb. xxv. 11.—Numb. xxi. 29.
1 Kings, xi. 7.—Jeremiah, xlviii. 13.

Year of the
flood 2016,
before Christ
332.

language they used we know not ; but suppose they spoke a dialect of the Canaaitish or Hebrew.

That they had once the knowledge of the true God, we may not only conclude from the piety of their great ancestor, who, without doubt, instructed his offspring in their duty ; but likewise from Scripture : for they retained this knowledge till the time of Moses, even after they had monstrously corrupted their religion, by introducing the worship of the false Gods, which they seem to have done pretty early, though the time cannot be fixed*.

The idols of the Moabites taken notice of in Scripture, are Chemosh and Baal-peor †, sometimes simply Peor ‡, or as the septuagint write the name Phegor, but what Gods these were, learned men are not agreed. St. Jerome supposes that they were both names of one and the same idol, and from the debaucheries into which those fell, who defiled them.

* Numb. xxi. 29.

† Numb. xxv. 1. 3.

‡ Ibid. ver. 18.

Joshua xxii. ver. 17.

themselves with their worship, several writers, both ancient and modern, have represented them as obscene deities, and not much different from Priapus. This opinion they endeavour to support from the etymologies of the names, and fancy some indecency is implied therein; others, however, imagine, that though the Israelites and Solomon were inticed by the Moabitish women to worship those idols, yet it does not thence follow that any immodest ceremonies were used in their worship; nor are any such mentioned in the most ancient authors; and the etymologies we think are not much to be relied on. Peor was the name of a mountain, where the high places of Baal were situated*: which word signifies no more than Lord, and was a title of the sun, perhaps added to that name, by way of distinction, to denote the deity adored in that place, though he had also probably a temple at Beth-peor, which stood in the plain†; Vossius supposes Baal-peor to be Bacchus; and Dr. Cumberland says he was properly called Meon, and this learned prelate

Year of the
flood 2016,
before Christ
332.

* Numb. xxiii. 38.

† Joshua, chap. 13. 17. 20.

Year of the
flood 2016,
before Christ
332.

late takes him to be the same with the Menes, Misraim, and Ofiris.

Of their religious rites and ceremonies, we can say very little. The obscenity which some authors charge them with, the psalmist takes notice, in speaking of those who were joined to Baal-peor; but says only that they eat the offerings of the dead: by which words, he may either mean, that the idol which they impiously honoured with divine worship, was no more than a dead man; or else, that their oblations were made to the infernal Gods.

They sacrificed both in the open air, on mountains dedicated to that service*, and in temples built to their idols in the cities; and beside oxen and rams, on extraordinary occasions, offered human victims, according to the Phenician custom.

* Numbers xxii. v. 47.

No. III.

The Religion of the Ammonites.

THIS people were the posterity of Ammon, otherwise called Ben Ammi, signifying the son of my people, our kindred, the offspring of Lot and his younger daughter *.

Year of the
flood 1451,
before Christ
897.

We are as little acquainted with the customs and manners of this people, as of the Moabites aforementioned. These had likewise kings, and were circumcised †, and seem to have been principally addicted to husbandry also.

The religion of the Ammonites, as we have already observed concerning that of the Moabites, was originally as pure as it could flow from so clear a stream, as the instruction of Lot; but they *also* swerved from it by degrees, and at length degenerated into the

* Gen. chap. xix. 32.

† Deuter. chap. ii. ver. 20.

Year of the
flood 1451,
before Christi
897.

the most stupid, and as is generally supposed,
the most cruel idolatry.

Their chief and peculiar deity is in the Scripture called Molech or Moloch. He is also thought to be understood under the names of Baal, Milcom, Melech, Adramelech, Anamelech, and the like.

These names or titles signify no more than lord or king; and sometimes have an epithet prefixed to them, as in the two last, where he is stiled the *mighty* and *rich* Melech or Moloch or king: these two were the Gods of the Sepharvites. I shall only speak of the Ammonitish Moloch. The learned are not positively agreed in what relates to him. It is on all hands allowed that they addressed him under the title of king or Moloch. His image is said to be hollow, and divided into seven receptacles. The first was opened for an offering of fine flour; the second for an offering of turtles; the third for a sheep; the fourth for a ram, the fifth for a calf, the sixth for an ox; the seventh for a child. It had the head of an ox, and the arms of a man stretched out in the act to receive. These
seven

seven receptacles are also called seven chapels; and instead of being within the image itself, are placed orderly before it *.

Year of the
flood 1451,
before Christ
897.

Whatever was the disposition of these seven places, their number corresponding with that of the sun, moon, and five other planets, has given room to suppose that they worshipped the sun; and the rather, as the oblations seem to rise in such proportion as might best answer the degree of each of these heavenly bodies. But it would be endless to expatiate in conjectures upon so obscure a subject as the learned have done.

As to the superstitions paid to Moloch, there is great disagreement among authors. By the scripture it is often said, that the Ammonites passed their seed through fire to Moloch. This expression is taken in a literal sense by some, in a figurative sense by others.

The first sentiment is embraced by the Jewish writers † who for the most part hold,
that

† Bedford's Script. Chron. page 259.

* Some of the Jewish writers hold, that the children were solemnly delivered to the priests; who upon their returning them, were carried
by

Year of the
flood 1451,
before Christ
897.

that the children were barely carried or led between two fires, by way of purification: the latter is adopted by the christian writers chiefly, who think that they actually burnt their children by way of sacrifice to this grim idol. There was a place near Jerusalem, where this horrid custom was observed; it was called *the valley of the † sons of Hinnom*,
fo

by their parents upon their shoulders between two fires. According to others the priests carried them.

A very eminent Jewish writer says, that the priests or servants of fire, persuaded men, that their children would die, if they did not pass them through fire: wherefore parents, being anxious for the lives of their children, and perceiving there was neither danger or difficulty in performing the ceremony, no one neglected it, considering that the children were not to be consumed by fire, but only to pass through it.

However, Vossius insists on it, that wherever the expression of passing through fire is met with, it must be taken in the strictness of the letter, but allows, that in cases of a great calamity, and upon other particular occasions, they gave up their offspring as an expiatory sacrifice to their god.

Selden is of a quite different sentiment, and will have it that they not only led their children through fire, but burnt them also at the same time.

This he proves as far as a matter of this nature can be ascertained, Upon the whole remembering how common a practice it was to offer up these unnatural oblations among some of the neighbouring nations, the same may probably have prevailed among the Ammonites.

† This valley was a delightful place, watered by the springs of Siloah. It was shady and beautiful, with gardens. And, indeed, it is
remark-

so named from the shrieks of the children sacrificed. They used among other instruments a drum, to drown the dreadful outcries of the unhappy victims.

Year of the
flood 1457,
before Christ
897.

No. IV.

The Religion of the Midianites.

THE Midianites were, in their most early times, evidently confounded with the Ishmaelites * and many ages afterwards, they are mentioned in conjunction with the Nabate-

Year of the
flood 1102,
before Christ
1245.

Cans

remarkable, that the heathens commonly chose fountain heads and solemn groves for the scenes of the homage they paid their deities. This custom is supposed to be borrowed from the Ammonites.

* Gen. xxxv. 37.—Nehemiah ii. iv. vi. xiii.—Josephus Antiq. lib. 12, chap. ii. 12.—Gen. xxv. 4.—Judges chap. viii. ver. 24.

Year of the
flood 1102,
before Christ
1245.

ans and Kedarenes, the posterity of Nabai-oth and Kedar, the sons of Ishmael. They were so incorporated as it were with the Moabites, that Moses almost considered them as one nation. Their religion was the same, and they acted in the strictest concert against the Israelites. The ties of blood united them likewise, as on the one side they were descended from Abraham, and on the other from Lot: It appears very plain from Job,* that the use of writing was very early known in these parts among the descendants of Abraham: and the Midianites being also of the number, we cannot suppose them to have been unacquainted with it. Sir Isaac Newton allows them the honour of instructing Moses in writing.

It is plain that the Midianites varied as much from each other in matter of religion, as in their manner of life. At first, they were no doubt pure and right in their way: how long they persevered in it, is not said. But in the days of Moses, they wallowed in all

* Job, xix. 23, 24.

all the abominations of the *Moabites*,* those we mean who were nearest to that idolatrous nation; nay, they exceeded them in

Year of the
flood 1102,
before Christ
1245.

their endeavours to pervert the children of Israel, when they lay in the plains of Moab, in persuading them to bow down to Peor; but we are indeed told that Peor was worshipped by the Midianitish women chiefly. Thus stood religion in the north of Midian. Now in the south we find them enlightened by a rational and sublime system, long after their brethren had fallen into the foulest corruption. As a proof of this we need only mention Jethro, who is commonly stiled the priest of Midian, and is said to have lived among, and by some thought to have presided over, the Midianites, † near the red sea. His behaviour in the camp of Israel is a sufficient argument ‡ in favour of them, yet, though their religion was otherwise very pure, it is somewhat remarkable they could not bear circumcision. § They offered up

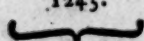
C 2

praises,

* Chronicles of Ancient Kingdoms, page 210. 125.—Gen. chap. xlix. 13.

† Josephus Antiq. book iv. chap. 6.—‡ Exodus, chap. xviii. ver. 10. 12.—§ Ibid. chap. iv. 25, 26.

Year of the
flood 1102,
before Christ,
1245.



praises, thanksgivings, and sacrifices to God, but their religious rites or ceremonies are nowhere spoken of. The most ancient record we find concerning this nation is, their purchasing Joseph from his brethren, for twenty pieces of silver, and carrying him away with them into Egypt, where they sold him to Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's chief officers *

* Gen. chap. xxxvii. v. 28. 36.

No.

in
the
sce

No. V.

The Religion of the Edomites.

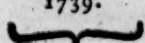
THE character of the Edomites is, that they were a bold and daring people, fond of broils and tumults, which they as much delighted in, as others did in the softening pleasures of luxury.* The Edomites, (those who migrated into Judea and were the latter Edomites,) whose character Josephus draws, were a degenerate race, quite strangers to the liberties, and noble spirit of their forefathers.

Year of the
flood 609,
before Christ
1739.

Concerning their religion, we are much in the dark. They at first were right in their belief and practice, as they were descended from Isaac, and used circumcision;

* Josephus's Antiq. book 13.

Year of the
flood 609,
before Christ
1739.



but they by degrees forgot all, and erred into idolatry (for idols we are told they had,) and had quite laid aside circumcision, till Hyrcan incorporated them with the Jews, from which time they were considered as but one nation with them in divine matters.

When the period of the downfall of the ancient kingdom of Edom arrived (as described in their history at large,) when these troublesome times came upon them, we know not how it fared with the Edomites in Idumea, except that they seem to have been continually agitated by broils and wars, till they were conquered by John Hyrcanus, who reduced them to the sore necessity of embracing the Jewish religion, or of quitting their country. They chose the former, and submitted to be circumcised, became incorporated with the Jews,* and, considering their descent, as well as their conversion, they were, upon a double account, reckoned as natural Jews; and accordingly in the first century after Christ, the name of Idumean

* Josephus Antiq. book xiii. chap. 17.

Idumean was lost and quite disused. * I Year of the
 shall here break off and refer the reader to flood 609,
 the history of the Jews for further satisfac- before Christ
 tion. 1739.

Before I quit the Edomites, I shall say, (though foreign to the main scope of this history) a word or two on their arts and sciences, which were doubtless great, considering the time, and were many and well perfected; and though perhaps there may be no necessity to suppose (as the excellent Sir Isaac Newton has done,) that they were the parents of those amiable sisters; yet we may safely pronounce, that they were not much, if at all behind hand with the most ancient learned nations. The invention and use of constellations appear † by the book of Job to have been known to the Edomites, among whom he dwelt: a rare instance of the early progress of astronomy, if we suppose his book to be of such ancient date as many think.

C 4

No.

* Prideaux's Connect. of the Old and New Testament, book v. page 307.

† Job, chap. ix. ver. 26.

No. VI.

The Religion of the Amalekites.

Year of the
flood 1253,
before Christ
1095.

AMALEK was the father of this people, and from him were they called Amalekites, and their country Amalekitis. Of their religion and civil customs we can know nothing for certain, since we are in the dark about their descent. If from Esau, we may suppose they used circumcision; and that the decree of their total excision was owing to the outrages they committed on the distressed Israelites;* but if of a Canaanitish race, their horrid idolatries subjected them, without all doubt, to one common doom with the Canaanitish nation: if the former, they had, at least for some time, the same religion with their progenitors, Abraham
Isaac,

* Exodus, chap. xvii. ver. 8. 14. 16.

Isaac, &c. if the latter, they gave probably, ^{Year of the flood 1253,} into all the abominations of their neigh- ^{before Christ 1095.} bours. Josephus mentions their idols; but the scripture terms them the idols of mount Seir; so that they seemed to have more properly belonged to the Edomites than to the Amalekites.

No.

No. VII.

The Religion of the Canaanites.

Year of the
flood 427,
before Christ
1921.

THEY were a daring, obstinate, and in war, very expert, and almost invincible people, and in the example of the Gibeonites, they wanted not craft or policy. They retained the pure religion quite down to the days of Abraham, who acknowledged Melchisedek to be priest of the most high God; and Melchisedek was indisputably a Canaanite, or at least dwelt there at that time, in high esteem and veneration. *

They never offered to molest Abraham; on the contrary they were ready to oblige him

* Sir Isaac Newton concludes, that they persevered in the true religion till the death of Melchisedek; but that afterwards they fell from it, and began to embrace idolatry, now spreading, as he thinks, from Chaldea. They are said to have been given to the superstition of the ancient Persians.

him in every thing, a noble example of which we have in the behaviour and good intentions of Ephron towards him, in the affair of the cave of Machpelah. To dwell no longer on this subject, we must hence allow, that there was not a general corruption of religion among the Canaanites at this day : but it must be granted, that the very Hittites, so seemingly commendable in the days of Abraham, degenerated apace, since they were become the aversion of Isaac and Rebecca, who could not endure the thoughts of their son Jacob's marrying among the daughters of Heth, as their son Esau had done, to their great grief. * So that about this time we must date the rise of those abominations, which subjected them to the wrath of God, and made them unworthy of the land which they possessed. In the days of Moses they were become incorrigible idolaters : for he commands the Israelites *to destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.* And lest they should

Year of the
flood 427.
before Christ
4921.

* Shuckford's Connect. of the Sacred and Prophane History, vol. 1.
book 2. page 100—163.

Year of the
flood 427,
before Christ
1921.

should pervert the Israelites, the latter were strictly enjoined not to intermarry with them, but to *smite, and utterly destroy them, nor shew mercy upon them.* By this we may form an idea of their abominable errors. They are accused of the cruel custom of sacrificing men, and are said to have passed their seed through fire to Moloch. The custom of sacrificing men they are charged with, as being the ancestors of the Phœnicians.

Their morals were as corrupt as their doctrine; adultery, beastiality of all sorts, profanation, incest, and all manner of uncleanness, are the sins laid to their charge, and which brought on the calamities they were doomed to.* And this was the character of this people, after they had erred from the right way.

* Leviticus, chap. xviii. ver. 21.

No. VIII.

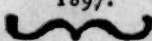
The Religion of the Philistines.

THE Philistines had very strong notions of liberty: They did not circumcise, and in their earliest times at least, held adultery in the greatest abomination.

Year of the
flood 451,
before Christ
1897.

In the days of Abraham and Isaac, they were a righteous people, and a hospitable nation, but they degenerated afterwards, and a revolution in government, religion, and morals, succeeded. From that time they became like other idolatrous nations, the same enormities crept in and prevailed among them. They are constantly mentioned in Scripture as strangers, and though possessed of a most considerable part of that delicious spot, the Land of Promise, yet God would

Year of the
flood 451,
before Christ
1897.



never suffer them to be driven out; they being Egyptians by descent, and not original natives, whose land only was promised to Abraham and his seed. Their arrogance and ambition were great, and so irreconcilable was their enmity to the Israelites, * that one would be almost tempted to think they were created on purpose to be a thorn in their side; for though the hand of God was evidently against them several times, and particularly when they detained the ark, yet they hardened their hearts, and closed their eyes against conviction, flattering themselves that they might one day compass their ends against the Israelites.

They seemed to have entertained a very fond veneration for their deities; in which they persisted, though they were eye witnesses of the shame and ignominy which befel them in the presence of the captive ark; nay they were so biased in their favour, as to imagine that their gods might prevail against him, who had, in so glaring a manner, put them to shame and disgrace.

Their

* 1 Chron. chap. vii. ver. 21.

Their religion was different at different times ; under their first race of kings, they were of one religion with the Hebrews ; Abimelech, in the sin he had like to have committed with Sarah, through Abraham's timidity, was favoured with a divine admonition from God ; and by his speech and behaviour at that time, it seems as if he had been used to converse with God. In after times they erred into endless superstitions and different kinds of idolatry : each of the principal or five cities, seeming to have an idol of its own. Marna, Marnas, or Marnash, was worshipped at Gaza, and is said to have migrated into Crete, and to have become the Cretan Jupiter. Dagon was worshipped at Azotus ; he seems to have been the greatest, the most ancient, and most favourite god they had : To which may be added, that he perhaps subsisted the longest of any, * that did not straggle out of the country. To him they ascribed the invention of bread corn, or of agriculture as his name imports. We cannot enter into the common notion of his being

Year of the
flood 451,
before Christ
1897.

* 1 Macc. x.

Year of the
flood 451,
before Christ
1897.

being represented as a monster, half man, and half fish, or consequently into another almost as common, that he is the same with the Syrian goddess Decreto, who we are told was represented under some such mixed form. Our opinion is, that this idol was in shape, wholly like a man; for we read of his head, his hands, and his feet. He stood in a temple at Azotus,* and had priests of his own, who, it seems, paid a very constant attendance on him. † Next to Dagon was Baalzebub, the god of Ekron. In the text of the New Testament he is Beelzebub, and the prince of devils. His name is rendered lord of flies, which by some is held to be a mock appellation bestowed on him by the Jews; but others think so stiled by his worshippers, as Hercules and others were, from his driving those insects away; and urge that Ahaziah in his sickness ‡ would scarcely have applied to him, if his name had carried any reproach with it. But it must be remembered, it is the sacred historian that makes use of that contemptuous term in derision: whereas

* Vide Universal History, vol. ii. page 222. † 1 Sam. chap. v. ver. 3, 4. ‡ 2 Kings, chap. i. ver. 2.

whereas the idolatrous monarch, who was one of his votaries, might call him by his common name, supposed to have been Baal-zebaoth, the Lord of armies, or Baal-shamim, lord of heaven, or some other bordering on Baal-zebub. How, or under what form he was represented, is uncertain: some place him on a throne, and attire him like a king, others paint him as a fly, a very wide difference! Not to dwell on this obscurity; it appears that he became an oracle of the highest repute for omniscience and veracity; that he had priests of his own, and that he, in the middle times at least, was much sought after by those who were anxious about futurity, or solicitous concerning other hidden matters. Decreto we take certainly to have been the goddess of Ascalon; but as we are herein only supported by prophane authority, without the least countenance from Scripture, we shall not insist on it. Gath, is seemingly the only city of all the five, unprovided with a deity; wherefore as the Scripture declares, that Ashtaroth, or Astarte *, was worshipped by this people,

Year of the
flood 451—
before Christ
1897.

D.

we

* 1 Sam. xxxi. 10.

Year of the
flood 451,
before Christ
1897.

we are ready to place her at Garth; and the rather, as this of all their cities, may have had most communication with Sidon. To speak in general concerning their religious rites and ceremonies, which is all we can do; they seem to have erected very large and spacious temples, or very wide halls, for the celebration of their solemn seasons and festivals*, for such they surely had: that their religious offices were attended with much pomp, and a great concourse from all parts: and that they presented their Gods with the chief of their spoil, and carried them about to war with them. We do not find in Scripture that they sacrificed their children, and yet the Curetes are said to be derived from them†.

Abimelech their king, in Abraham's days, was an holy and just person, and appears to have had some intercourse with God †. He

resided

* Judges, chap. xvi. ver. 27.

† The Curetes did sacrifice their children to Saturn, and from the similitude this name bears to Cherethites, or Philistines, it has been advanced that they are the same people, but as we have no warrant for saying the Philistines practised so barbarous and unnatural a custom, we may venture to pronounce that they learned it not from them, but borrowed it elsewhere.

† Genesis, chap. xx. ver. 3. et seq.

resided at Gerar, of which place he is called king, and had like to have been drawn into a very fatal snare, by the too great caution of Abraham; who coming into his kingdom, to be at a distance from the vale of Siddim, pretended that Sarah was not his wife, but his sister. Abimelech saw her, was taken with her charms, and understanding she was a single woman, resolved to take her to his bed: but ere he had accomplished his desires, he was warned by God to return the woman to her concealed husband, and that upon pain of death. Abimelech hereupon excused himself to the divine vision, upon the innocence of his intentions; and seeming to have fresh in mind the terrible overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah; Lord, says he, wilt thou also slay a righteous nation? as if he would take vengeance on his people for a crime he was going ignorantly to commit. But he had the comfortable answer in a vision or dream, that God knew well, and approved his integrity: that he had withheld him from sinning, and that Abraham should, at his request, pray for him, and he should live. Being thus admonished, he first acquainted his servants with what had happened, who were instantly

Year of the
flood 451,
before Christ
1897.

Year of the
flood, 451—
before Christ
1897.

seized with great dread : then calling Abraham, he asked what he had done to him, that he should mislead him into so dangerous an error, or what offence he had ever committed against him, that he should tempt him to such a sin, as might have proved the ruin, not of himself only, but of his whole kingdom. Indeed, says he, you have not used me well : What have you observed in the morals or behaviour of me and my people, that you should imagine we would offer any violence to your wife ? The answer he received from Abraham, was a frank confession of the truth; he acknowledging without disguise, that he feared they had not been endued with right notions of God and his laws, and that he certainly should be deprived of his life, that they might the more freely enjoy Sarah. He added, that in saying she was his sister, he had spoken nothing but the truth, she being really so ; and ended in his apology, with acquainting the king, that in strange places it had always been his custom to make her pass for his sister only, for fear of the worst. Abimelech, satisfied with what he heard, in consequence thereof, and in obedience to the divine command, not

only

only returned Sarah to Abraham, but made him a very handsome present in sheep, oxen, and servants, both men and women, declaring to him withal, that he was welcome to live in what part of his dominions he best liked. He also made a considerable present to Sarah, and accompanied it with a speech, which ours, and most versions have rendered as a reproof; but was quite the contrary, as may be seen in the Jewish history.

Year of the
flood 451,
before Christ
1897.

In this manner did Abimelech comply with the divine admonition, and upon the prayers of Abraham, he and his whole house were restored to their natural faculties, of which they had been deprived for Sarah's sake: the Lord having rendered the men impotent, and the women barren,*

Ever after this Abimelech lived in perfect harmony with Abraham; and that the same might be transmitted down to posterity; Abimelech, with participation of Phicol, the chief captain of his host, proposed an oath

D 3

to

* Or with such swellings in the secret parts, that the men could neither enjoy their wives, or the women who were with child be delivered. We find this story altered by Josephus, who says, Abimelech was taken with

Year of the
flood 451—
before Christ
1897.

to Abraham, whereby he should bind his posterity to live in amity with his, and deal by them just as he had dealt by him. This was readily embraced by Abraham; but first he desired a dispute might be decided concerning a well, which Abimelech's servants had forcibly taken from him. Abimelech declared he never heard of this outrage till that moment; and that nothing of the kind should have been then to be complained of, had Abraham informed him of it.

And, that this matter might be terminated in such a manner, as to admit of no further dispute, Abraham, among the numerous presents he made him of sheep and oxen, severed seven ewe lambs, which he gave him to be a standing testimony of his having dug, and consequently of his being the right owner of that well. Abimelech accepted of them accordingly, and the well was, from them, called Beersebah.*

with so violent a fit of sickness that his life was despaired of: that in the midst of it he had a dream, which admonished him concerning Sarah; that finding himself mending, he called together his friends, and disclosed to them his dream, and the violence of his passion, and that thereupon he made up the matter with Abraham, &c.

* Genesis, chap. xx and xxi, ver. 22 to 32.

No.

No. IX.

The Religion of the Pagans.

THEY were a sect of Heathens who worshipped idols and false Gods; idolatry was not confined alone to the Pagans, every nation abounded with idolaters, who were guilty of impious, superstitious, and sacrilegious worship. At this time idolatry flourishes most in China.

All religions, true or false, have their mysteries: The Pagan religion was remarkably full of them, but they were generally mysteries of iniquity, and concealed only because their being published would have rendered their religion ridiculous and odious. Thus the sacred writings often speak of the infa-

mous mysteries of the Pagan deities, in which most shameful crimes were committed under the specious veil of religion.

The whole religion of Egyptians (who were equally idolatrous) was mysterious from the beginning to the end, and both their doctrine and worship wrapped up in symbols and hieroglyphics.

The Heathens had formerly idols of all sorts, and of every kind of matter, as gold silver, brass, stone, wood, &c.; even in the church of Rome too much of this is practised, whose extravagant veneration for the images and pictures of saints, especially the Virgin Mary; and the pretended efficacy and power they attribute to the cross, gives too much ground for the charge of idolatry in their worship, though they pretend to the only true religion of Jesus Christ.

No. X.

The Religion of the Antediluvians.

* THE only thing we know as to their religious rites is, that they offered sacrifices, and that very early, both of the fruits of the earth, and of animals; but whether the blood and flesh of the animals, or only their milk and wool were offered, is a dispute not plainly cleared up. Some have endeavoured to prove that all the Patriarchs from Adam, had stated places, and annual and weekly times set apart for divine worship, and also a separate maintenance for the priests; all which particulars may be true, though they cannot be made out from the Scripture. But what is more extraordinary, they pretend to tell us

the

the very day of the week on which the Antediluvian sabbath was kept, and that it was the same with the Christian sabbath, or Sunday; which notion is, we fear, very groundless and precarious.*

When I am speaking of the *religion* of the Antediluvians, a short digression concerning their longevity may not be altogether unpleasing to the reader, though foreign to the scope of this history.

One of the most extraordinary circumstances which occur in the Antediluvian history, is the vast length of mens' lives in those first ages, in comparison of our own. Few now arrive to 80 or 100 years, whereas before the flood they frequently lived to near 1000; a disproportion almost incredible, were it not incontestibly certain, from the joint testimonies of sacred and prophane writers, † whose authority in this point being not to be eluded; some, to reconcile the matter with probability, have imagined that the

* Smith's Doctrine of the Church of England, concerning the Lord's Day.

† Josephus.

the ages of those first men might possibly be computed, not by solar years, but months, * which reduces the length of their lives rather to a shorter period than our own; but for this there is not the least foundation; besides the many absurdities that would thence follow, such as their begetting children at about six years of age, as some of them in that case must have done, and the contraction of the whole interval between the creation and the deluge, to considerably less than two hundred years, even according to the larger computation of the Septuagint.

The causes of this longevity are variously assigned; some have imputed it to the sobriety of the Antediluvians, and the simplicity of their diet; that they eat no flesh, † and had none of those provocations to gluttony, which *wit* and *vice* have since invented. This, were it true, might have some effect, but not possibly to such a degree as we are
speak-

* Augustin de Civit Dei, lib. xv. chap 12.

† A learned physician has advanced a very contrary opinion. Among several causes of the longevity of the first men, enumerated by him, one is, their eating of raw flesh; the most nourishing and best parts whereof, he supposes, are carried off in dressing, by the action of the fire.

speaking of, since we have had many temperate and abstemious persons in latter ages, who yet seldom have exceeded the usual period. Others have imputed it to the excellency of their fruits, and some peculiar virtue in the herbs and plants of those days; but as the earth was cursed immediately after the fall, its fruits we may suppose gradually decreased in their virtue and goodness till the flood; and yet we do not see the length of mens' lives decreased considerably, if at all, during that interval. Others have thought that the long lives of those inhabitants of the old world proceeded from the strength of their stamina, or first principles of their bodily constitutions, which might indeed be a concurrent, but not the sole and adequate cause of their longevity: for Shem, who was born before the deluge, and had all the virtue of the Antediluvian constitution, fell 300 years short of the age of his forefathers, because the greatest part of his life was passed after the flood.*

* Dr. Burnet's Body of Divinity, p. 307.

It has therefore been more rationally supposed, that the chief cause of this longevity, was the wholesome constitution of the Antediluvian air, which after the deluge became corrupted and unwholesome, breaking by degrees the pristine crasis of the body, and shortening mens' lives, in a very few ages, to the present standard. But how the flood should induce or occasion such a change in the air, is not easy to comprehend.*

* See Stackhouse's History of the Bible.—Ray on the Deluge, p. 122.

Burnet's Theory, book 2d.

No.

No. XI.

ATHENIANS.

***SOLON**, the great lawgiver of the Athenians, made but few laws relating to *Religion*, and against Parricides he made none, assigning for it this reason: That he scarce believed that any Athenian would be so wicked. †

* Vide Universal Hist. vol. vi. p. 316.

† Matters of Religion among the Athenians, as blasphemy against the Gods, contempt of mysteries, consecration of new Gods, new ceremonies in divine worship, belonged to the Judges. Plato therefore having learned in Egypt that there was but one God, was forced to conceal his knowledge, for fear of being questioned by the Areopagites, and St. Paul was on this account arraigned before them, as a setter forth of strange Gods, when he preached Jesus and Anastasis, that is, the resurrection. — Acts, chap. xviii. ver 18, 19.

No.

No. XII.

The Religion of the ancient Syrians.

IT is certain the ancient Syrians had many idols of very great repute; among the rest, Rimmon, whose temple stood at Damascus; he seems to have been at least the principal God of Damascene, which is all I can venture to say about him.

Year of the
flood 1678,
before Christ
674.

This ancient god in time gave way to another: for the Syrians deifying their king Ben-hadad, under the stile of Adad, or Ader,* he was considered as their most glorious and auspicious god. This god, and others of the same stamp, flourished as long, we may suppose, as the ancient Syrians possessed

* Joseph. Antiq. lib. ix. chap. 2.

Year of the
flood 1678,
before Christ
674.

essed this their seat. But both they and their Gods, in a great measure, underwent the same fate, when Syria was conquered and transplanted by Tiglathpileser.

Hereupon the religion of this country may have said to change face: A new idolatry was introduced, or many additions to the old were brought in by the new inhabitants, who were sent hither by the Assyrians. What changes and alterations this system suffered under the Babylonians first, the Persians afterwards, and lastly, under the Seleucidæ and Romans, we cannot presume to say; but an account of it, such as it was in the second century of the Christian æra, I shall borrow from Lucian, who was an eye witness of what he says, for the most part, and the rest he learned from the priests.

At Hierapolis, or the holy city, or Magog, as the Syrians themselves are said * to have called it in the province of Cyrrhestica, stood the temple of the great Syrian Goddess, upon an eminence in the midst of the city, surrounded

* Pliny's Nat. Hist. lib. v. c. 23.

rounded by a double inclosure, or two walls: At the north side it had a court or porch before it, of about five or six hundred feet in circumference, where stood the priaps 300 fathom, or 300 cubits high. These obscene images, or rather columns, were but slender, but by whom, or to whom they were erected, was the subject of much fable. The front of the temple itself stood east, and before it was a tower, raised upon a terrace about twelve feet high. It was built after the manner of the Ionian temples, the porch was adorned with golden doors, nay the whole temple glittered with gold, and particularly the roof. The air there, was nothing inferior to the sweetest of Arabia, and it so strongly perfumed the garments of all who visited the temple, that they retained the fragrancy for a considerable time.

Year of the
flood 1678,
before Christ
674.

This temple was not without its sanctuary, into which no admision was allowed, even to such of the priests as were not in an especial manner allied to the Gods there kept, or wholly addicted to their service and worship. There were a variety of idols, statues, &c.

E in

Year of the
flood 1678,
before Christ
674.

in the temple, which Lucian very minutely describes, to whom the curious reader is referred.*

Close to this temple was a lake, where sacred fishes were preserved and attended; some of the largest had names, and came when called. One of these had golden fins; The lake itself was 200 fathoms deep, as the priests reported; and in the midst of it stood a stone altar, which seemed to swim, as most thought it did; for the pillar or what else supported it, was not easily to be discerned. This altar was for ever crowned, and reeking with incense, and daily frequented. Without the temple stood a large brazen altar, and statues of kings and priests almost innumerable.

The oracle in this temple was quite extraordinary, and may serve to evince how deeply the priests were versed in the mystery of their profession. Here were images which seemed to move, sweat, and deliver oracles, as if alive; and noises were often heard in the temple,

* Lucian, chap. xxviii. 37.

temple when it was shut up: Apollo, we are told, was the chief oracle. Other idols delivered their answers by the priests: this syrian Apollo did all himself. He was the only God that had cloaths; the reason of which was, as we apprehend, that a living person might the more easily be concealed under the covering, and act the part of the pretended deity. When he condescended to answer those who consulted him, he first began to move himself, upon which he was immediately lifted up by the priests, for if they did not run to his assistance, he soon fell into violent agonies and convulsions. However, the priests who came to his assistance, he treated very roughly, till the high priest coming up to him, proposed his question. He had the direction of all matters, sacred and civil, being upon all occasions consulted; and he always declared the time when it was proper to carry the image, called the sign, in procession to the sea. In fine, my author assures us that he saw this God walk in the air.*

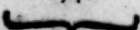
Year of the
flood 1678,
before Christ
674.

E 2

The

* Lucian, chap. 34.

Year of the
flood 1678,
before Christ
674.



The revenues and treasure of this temple, were in proportion to its splendour, to the great majesty of the goddess, and to the mighty power and excellence of her kindred deities that attended her.

It is remarkable of their eunuch priests, that they were emasculated by the voluntary operation of their own hands. How this unnatural custom came to prevail, is accounted for by the following story.

Stratonice, who built this temple, having for some time neglected the admonitions of the goddess, requiring her to undertake the work, was in the end, by a grievous distemper with which the goddess afflicted her, forced to comply.* The king, her husband, readily agreed to her obeying the goddess, but committed the care of her to a beautiful youth named Combabus, who, no way fond of his commission, but dreading the consequences of being so much alone with the beauteous queen, deprived himself of the marks of his sex, and gave them carefully sealed

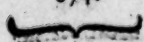
* Lucian, chap. 19.

sealed up, to the king. Being afterwards tempted by the queen to betray his trust, he acquainted her with the condition to which he had voluntarily reduced himself. However, he was, through malice or envy, condemned to expiate with his death his infidelity to the prince, and impiety to the goddesses. As they were leading him to the place of execution, he called for the treasure he had left with the king; which being produced, his intended punishment was converted into the most tender embraces in the arms of his prince, who heaping honours and riches on him, granted him leave to finish the temple, where he passed the remainder of his life; and there stood his statue in brass.

Year of the
flood 1678,
before Christ
674.

With respect to the sacrifices, ceremonies, and customs peculiar to this holy city;—they sacrifice twice a day to Jupiter in silence; to Juno with great noise of minstrels and singers. Every spring they celebrated an extraordinary sacrifice; for felling some great trees in the court of the temple, they garnished them with goats, sheep, birds, rich

Year of the
flood 1678,
before Christ
674.



vestments, and fine pieces of wrought gold and silver; they then carried the sacred images round these decorated trees, and set fire to them, and all was consumed. There are many more festivals, ceremonies and sacrifices made use of, but a further recital would only prove tedious to the reader, and at the same time lead me too far out of my way.

I shall conclude by observing they had sometimes a way of sacrificing, which was truly shocking and barbarous. They first crowned the victims with garlands, and then drove them out of the porch or court of the temple, one side of which was a steep precipice, where they perished. Nay, some were so mad as to tie up their children in sacks, and then shove them down the same precipice.*

* Lucian, chap. 57.

No. XIII.

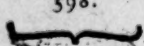
The Religion of the ancient Phœnicians.

IT is universally allowed by historians, that the Phœnicians were Canaanites by descent, though their blood must have been mixed with that of foreigners, in process of time, as happens in all trading places.

Year of the
flood 1750,
before Christ
598.

In respect to their religion, the Phœnicians being originally Canaanites, must once, as well as the rest of their kindred, have had a knowledge of the true God, whom they, as is most likely, called Baal, or Lord. But by degrees degenerating to the deification and worship of such as were once mortals like themselves, they became perverse and blind idolaters.

Year of the
flood 1750,
before Christ
598.



The first or chief of their deities, as we find them in their own records, is Beelsamen, which in Phœnician, is Lord of Heaven, thereby meaning the sun. There are a number of others which I shall pass over, How far they retained or lost a due sense and notion of the true God, in this their multifarious idolatry, is hard to determine. It is reported of the Egyptians, that amidst their endless polytheism, they still acknowledge one supreme God; and the religion of the old Phœnicians, was in substance hardly different from that of the Egyptians.

Baal had his prophets and his priests in great number. We read of 450 of them, which were fed at Jezebel's table only. They were wont to offer burnt offerings and sacrifices to this God, and dance about the altar with violent gesticulations, and having worked themselves to the height of phrenzy by this exercise, and a violent straining of their voices, they began to cut their bodies with knives and lancets; then they betook themselves to prophecy, as it is called, or rather raved, as if possessed by some invisible power,

power, which was their barbarous way of worship. Nor need we wonder at it, considering their more barbarous custom in earlier days, of sacrificing even such persons, as were most dear to them, to appease or reconcile their false gods, when they laboured under any public calamities. This is charged very home upon them, not only by the testimony of others, but by their own confession: so barbarous a practice they had in common with the Egyptians. But it was discontinued here, as well as in Egypt, pretty early; tho' at what time, and upon what motives, we are not made acquainted with.

Year of the
flood 1750.
before Christ
598.

* Herodotus supposes the Phœnicians to have been circumcised, but Josephus † asserts, that none of the nations, included under the vague names of Palestine and Syria, used that rite, the Jews excepted: so that if the Phœnicians had anciently that custom, they came in time to neglect it, and at length wholly laid it aside. They abstained from the flesh of swine,

No.

* Herodotus, book ii. chap. 104.

† Josephus, book 1,

No. XIV.

The Religion of the Assyrians.

Year of the
flood 1957,
before Christ,
771.

WE are pretty much in the dark as to their religion ; in general we know they were idolaters, and that they had their idols and temples.

Nifroch is likely to have been their principal God, at least at one time ; but Seldon declares * he knows nothing at all of him, and therefore any enquiry after so palpable an obscurity would be needless. Nergal was not properly, it seems, an Assyrian deity : Adramelech may perhaps be properly termed a God of this country, and is said to have been represented as a mule or a peacock : Anamelech, in like manner, is said to have been

* De diis Syris, lib. ii. chap. 10.

been represented as an horse, or a pheasant, or a quail ; but these are all rabinical dreams, and ought to be looked on as such. For this small part of their religion, and something more which we shall recollect in the religion of Babylon, which may have been the very same, we are beholden to the Scripture and the Jews, the rest we must more immediately trace out elsewhere ; and accordingly look back to the superstitions of the Philistines, Syrians, and Phœnicians.

Year of the
flood 1957,
before Christ
771.

In the next chapter we shall make ample amends for the deficiency in this, when we speak of the religion of the Babylonians.

We shall therefore only for the present observe, that the Assyrians, and likewise the Syrians, paid particular devotion to fishes, in memory, as we are told, of the goddess Derceto of Ascalon, who was wholly or partly metamorphosed into a creature of that sort, and that they honoured Semiramis in the form of a dove, or pigeon, either because she was nursed by them, when exposed after

Year of the
flood 1957,
before Christ
771.

after her birth, or because they attended her at her death, when it is fabled she was changed into a bird of that sort, which is all I can say of the Assyrian religion.*

* Diador Sicul, lib. ii.

No. XV.

The Religion of the Babylonians.

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747

THE religion and boasted learning of the Babylonians are so blended together, that we hardly know how to separate them into distinct heads ; for the Chaldees, properly so called, were not only their priests, but also their learned men, whose whole science seems to

to have been subservient to the purposes of superstition and infatuation. These Chaldeans were perhaps more distinguished from the people, than the clergy are from the laity with us ; and were as much revered in their country as the Egyptian priests were in theirs ; and are said to have enjoyed the same privileges. They were wholly devoted to the business of their superstitions and their religion : and pretended to prophecy, and to the gift of prediction by the rules of augury, the flight of birds, and the inspection of victims ; they explained dreams, and all the extraordinary phenomena of nature, as portending good or evil to men or nations, and were thought by their enchantments and invocations to affect mankind either with happiness or misery. Having by their situation been early addicted to celestial observations, they, instead of conceiving, as they ought to have done, just notions concerning the omnipotence of the Creator and mover of the heavenly bodies ; and of being confirmed in a due belief and practice of what had been handed by tradition down to men by Noah and his sons, fell into the impious error of esteeming

Year of the
flood 1651,
before Christ
747.

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747.

esteeming those bodies as Gods, and the immediate governors of the world, in subordination, however, to the deity, who was invisible, but by his works and the effects of his power. They concluded then, that God had created the stars and great luminaries to govern the world; that he had accordingly placed them on high and substituted them, his ministers; and that it was but just and natural they should be praised, honoured, and extolled: and that it was even the will of God they should be magnified, feared, and worshipped; just as a king desires his servants should be respected in honour of himself.

Persuaded of this, they began (in their first stage of idolatry) to build temples to the stars, to sacrifice to them, to praise them, and to bow down before them, that through their means they might obtain the favour and good will of God, so that they esteemed them as mediators between God and them; for that there was a necessity for a mediatory office between God and man, is observed * to have been a notion

* Prideaux's Connect. of the History of the Old and New Testament, part 1. book iii. p. 177, in Octavo.

notion generally maintained among mankind from the beginning.

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747.

‘ Conscious of their own meanness, vile-
‘ ness, and impurity, and unable to conceive
‘ how it was possible for them, of them-
‘ selves, alone to have any access to the all
‘ holy, all glorious, and supreme governor
‘ of all things : they considered him as too
‘ high, and too pure, and themselves as too
‘ low and polluted for such a converse ; and
‘ therefore concluded there must be a medi-
‘ ator, by whose means only they could
‘ make any address to him, and by whose in-
‘ tercession alone, any of their petitions could
‘ be accepted of. But no clear revelation
‘ being then made of the mediator, whom
‘ God had appointed, because, as yet, he
‘ had not been manifested unto the world,
‘ they took upon them to address themselves
‘ unto him, by mediators of their own
‘ choosing ; and their notion of the sun,
‘ moon, and stars, being, that they were the
‘ tabernacles, or habitations of intelligences,
‘ which animated those orbs in the same
‘ manner as the soul of man animates

Year of the
flood 1601
before Christ
747.

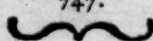
his body, and were the causes of all their motions, and that those intelligences were of a middle nature, between God and them, they thought these the properest beings to become the mediators between God and them; and therefore the planets being the nearest to them of all these heavenly bodies, and generally looked on to have the greatest influence on this world: they made choice of them, in the first place, for their *Gods mediators*, who were to mediate for them with the supreme God, and procure from him the mercies and favours which they prayed for; and accordingly they directed divine worship to them as such, and here began all the idolatry that hath been practised in the world.

For persuading themselves of this doctrine, they became anxious about the most effectual means of making their worship acceptable to the several deities; whence they first began to build temples or tabernacles to them, and dedicated to their service, and to be as places of abode for them; but as in matters of this kind, there can be no stable form, where there

there is no immediate revelation, and men actuated either by fear, or avarice, or ambition, or aught else, had liberty to pretend to what they knew nothing of, in process of time impostors arose, and gave out that they had had it enjoined and commanded from God himself, that this star, or that, or all of them, should be worshipped in this or that manner, and represented under this or that form, and that none of any age or degree, should be exempt from the worship thereof: and this they impudently gave out in a solemn manner for revelation. Upon this it was that men began to furnish the tabernacles or temples with images, and to erect the same under trees, and upon the tops of hills or mountains: and from hence forward they assembled themselves together to pay them worship, and began to hope for all good, and to dread all evil, as proceeding from them, and to honour them with the deepest reverence, and to fear them: and their priests, sensible of the sweets of the trade, began to think of forms of duty and practice, to be observed by the credulous and deluded multitude.*

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747.

Year of the
flood 1601
before Christ
747.



titude.* Other impostors there were who improved upon the first, and pretended to have been honoured with particular instructions from particular stars, concerning the exact mode of the worship due, or peculiar to them, and what ought, and what ought not to be done to please them, so that in process of time, the name of God became obliterated among men, and the most stupid idolatry possessed the place of true religion.

Such was the rise and first progress of idolatry, and such were the original Sabian doctrines; which taking root first among the Chaldeans, afterwards spread their branches so far, as to keep in darkness, at one time, all the nations of the east. For it must be difficult to conceive how men could have been led into so gross an absurdity as to worship wood, stone, or metal, formed and fashioned by their own hands, if it be not at the same time allowed, that they must have imagined their images to have been animated or informed with a supernatural power, by some supernatural means. A late author† thinks

* Prideaux, as before cited.

† Ibid.

thinks it more natural to suppose that their loss to know how to address themselves to the planets, when they were beneath the horizon, was, what first suggested to them the use of images, for that, whenever they paid their devotions to any of them in their tabernacles, they directed their worship towards the planet: which they may have thought of none effect, when he was absent and hidden from sight; and that therefore they thought to supply his absence by a representation. Thus it may have been, though it may be as natural to suppose, that as their priests observed the stars as their Gods, and made them the chief object of their study, and persuaded themselves that each star or planet was actuated by an intelligence they gave out to the people from time to time, that those superior beings had revealed their will to them, just as their crazy imaginations or designing craft may have suggested to them.

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ

747

Be that as it will, it is certain that the first image worshippers did not pretend to pay adoration to uninformed wood, stone, or

F 2

metal,

Year of the
flood 1601
before Christ
747.

metal, and that the Sabians, in their transition from planet worship to image worship, pretended to have infused the virtues of the planet into the image that was meant to represent it, which they thought to effect by forms of consecration, and by various incantations, whereby to draw down from the stars their several intelligences into their respective idols; and hence came all the foolish superstition of *Talismans*;* and upon these pretended principles of communicative operation, all the branches of magic and sorcery must have had their foundation.

That this was the first origin of image worship is evident; and that the same was first derived from the heavenly bodies, the most conspicuous and glorious to sight, is evident, by the primary Gods of the heathens in general, which are Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Mercury, Venus, and Diana, by which we can understand no other than the sun and moon, and the five greatest luminaries next to them.

This

* Prideaux as before cited.

This was the religion of the Babylonians, Assyrians, and Mesopotamians, even before the days of Abraham; nay, in the days of Enos, the son of Seth, whose descendants are said to be the first that cultivated astronomy and astrology; the Sabians themselves boasting the origin of their religion from Seth, and pretending to have been denominated from a son of his, called Sabius, as also to have among them a book, which they called the book of Seth.*

Year of the
flood 1601
before Christ
747.

This was the state of the old Babylonian religion, till they came to deify mortal man, as well as the celestial bodies. In this we are apt to think they were not the first, and that the Syrians, whose empire was confessedly older than either the Assyrian or Babylonian, shewed them the way, by deifying their great kings, Benhadad the second, and Hazael. A late learned author † is inclined to think, that the first Sabians or Idolaters, desirous to have all the mediation possible with the supreme God, and imagining that good men had a power with him to intercede

F 3

for

* Prideaux, *ibid.*† *Ibid.*

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747.

for them, deified many of those they thought to be such; and that thus they increased the number of their Gods. This opinion is very favourable to them, but reflects not a little upon the purity of the Roman church, which teaches the same doctrine, and allows the same practice; and this calls to my mind how frequently Rome is supposed to be signified under the type of Babylon; and perhaps there may not be so wide a difference between some parts of the two religions, as may be generally imagined. But to wave this, as foreign to my purpose, I should rather choose to think that they deified their greatest and most powerful men; and that however they may have paid the same honour to men of virtue, their most conspicuous Gods were their warriors, and most potent kings.

According to this we are told, * that by the vain glory of men, idols entered into the world. That *in process of time, an ungodly custom grown strong, was kept as a law, and graven images were worshipped by the commandment of kings*, or as some authors will have it,

* Wisdom of Solomon, chap. xiv. ver. 14. 16, 17.

it, tyrants : That whom men could not honour in presence, because they dwelt far off, they took the counterfeit of his visage from far, and made an express image of a king, whom they honoured to the end, that by their forwardness, they might flatter him that was absent as if he was present.

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747.

This was most certainly the case, with regard to the deification of the kings, who could not be contented with being less than Gods. The same author * assigns two other reasons for this practice, which must strongly co-operate with the former : First, the grief of a parent for his child, untimely snatched away, whose image he may have been tempted to honour as God when dead, and to deliver to those beneath, or in subjection to him, ceremonies and sacrifices of duty and commemoration : And secondly, The skill of the workman, who by his art might greatly contribute to the deception of the ignorant ; for that, ambitious to flatter some great man, he may have exerted all in his power to represent him beyond what he truly was, and so,

F 4

by

* Wisdom of Solomon, ver. 15, 18, 19, 20, 21.

Year of the
flood 1601
before Christ
747.

by the beauty of his work, captivate and delude the unwary multitude, who took him now for a god, whom a little before they honoured but as a man; and that thus, men, subject either to calamity or tyranny, ascribed unto stones and stocks, the incommunicable name of God.

However, it was an opinion, that Ninus was the first who set up images to be worshipped, and particularly one of his father Belus; and granted privileges and pardons to those who resorted to it. This Belus had a temple erected to him in the city of Babylon, and was received as their primary god, he being the first founder of all the Assyrian and Babylonian grandeur, and source of all the reverence and adoration claimed by his successors, both at Babylon and Nineveh. To him they erected the tower so famous in all ages since; though it should seem that the honour of this tower or temple was meant to be divided between him and the true God. This building consisted of eight towers raised upon one another; and the uppermost was a bed magnificently set forth, and a golden table

table near it, but no image; nor was any body suffered to be here in the night, but a particular woman, who, as the priests gave out, was in an especial manner, preferred by the God before all others. In this place they taught that he used to come and repose himself; so that they must have considered him as the supreme God, who either could not be represented, or would not bear such presumption in them as to offer at it. But beneath this there was another temple, where there was a gigantic image of Jupiter [Belus] all of gold, with a table before him all of the same metal; his throne was gold also, as well as all the furniture about him, insomuch, that the whole work was valued at 800 talents of gold.*

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747.

This, it seems, was not the only statue in this temple; for we read of another, all of solid gold, and twelve cubits † in height; but whether our author really designs to describe two distinct idols, by giving the weight of the one, and the dimensions of the other, or whether he gives the weight and dimensions

* Herodotus, book i. chap. 183.

† Idem ibid.

Year of the
flood, 1601
before Christ
747.

fions above, as belonging to one and the same, is a point not altogether cleared up.

There are a vast variety of gods, goddesses, temples, sacrifices, statues, altars, &c. relative to the superstitious idolatry, and religious rites and ceremonies of the Babylonians, which I shall pass over, as they would tire the reader, and afford very little amusement, and conclude the whole with a few words, on some of their idols, which were of gold, and silver, and of wood, as described in Jeremiah, which were carried about in procession, surrounded with multitudes worshipping them.* They were crowned and clothed in purple, and black with the smoke of incense. Their temples were full of smoke and dust, raised and caused by the numerous resort of votaries. The priests made sometimes free with the gold and silver presented to their gods, and either kept it for themselves, or bestowed it upon lewd prostitutes, who were accounted sacred. Whatever was offered as a sacrifice to their gods, they were wont to embezzle, and appropriate to themselves,

* Baruch, chap. 6.

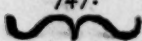
selves, and clothe their wives and children with the garments that had been given to adorn their idols. In return for this, they were sure to light up numbers of tapers and candles to their images, and to sit in the temples with their beards and heads close shaven, uncovered, and with garments rent and torn, crying out before their gods, as for the lamentation of some person deceased. Such was the corruption and degeneracy of this people, and such their practice, which could not help having a very bad effect on their morals.

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747.

The Babylonians having given rise to all the idolatries and superstitions in vogue among the neighbouring nations; we must charge them with the horrible custom of sacrificing human victims, to appease or conciliate their god or gods. That this custom prevailed among most of these nations, is manifest from all accounts we have of them; and it is no less manifest, that it took birth among the Babylonians, who communicated the rest of their superstitions to all their neighbours. This custom however, grew so shocking

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ

747.



shocking to human nature, that it seems in the latter days, at least, of the Babylonians, to have been confined to a particular sect or tribe. For the Sepharvites are said, by way of distinction from the other Babylonians, to have burnt their children in the fire to Adramelech and Anamelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.*

There are traces of this ancient cruelty to be discerned in the worship and rites of the Syrian, or rather Assyrian goddess at Hierapolis, to whom parents, without remorse, sacrificed their children, by throwing them down a precipice in her temple, as has been already described, under the religion of the Syrians.

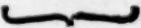
* 2 Kings, chap. xvii. ver. 31.

No. XVI.

*The Religion of the Ancient Phrygians.*

AS to the religion of the ancient Phrygians, they were greatly addicted to superstition.

Year of the
flood 1713,
before Christ
635.



They had many idols, but the goddess Cybele seems to have been their principal deity. She was called Cybele, Berecynthia, Dindymene, from Cybelus, Berecynthus, Dindymenus, all hills of Phrygia, and Idea, from mount Ida, in Troas, because, on these hills she was worshipped in a particular manner. She was also named Cubebe, because her priests, when seized with their frantic fits, used to throw themselves on their heads, that name being derived from a Phœnician verb
of

Year of the
flood 1713,
before Christ
635.

of that import. An antient author * gives us the following account of Cybele, from the mythology of the Gentiles: There was a vast rock on the borders of Phrygia, called in the language of that country Agdus, from whence Deucalion and Pyrrha, by the direction of Themis, took the stones, which they made use of, to repair mankind after the deluge. From one of these sprung Cybele, the great mother of the gods. The same rock conceived by Jupiter, and brought forth Acdestis, who is said to have been an hermaphrodite of invincible strength, and of a most cruel and intractable temper; and, above all, a most outrageous enemy of the gods, who were in no small fear of him; till Bacchus, by a cunning contrivance, found means to deprive him of his manhood, and thereby rendered him somewhat more tractable. From the blood he shed on this occasion, sprung up a pomegranate tree, loaded with fruit, in full perfection and maturity, which Nana, daughter to king Sangarius, being wonderfully taken with, gathered one; and as it was of a most beautiful appearance, put

5

it

* Arnobius contra Gentes, lib. 8.

it in her bosom. This cost her dear; for soon after proving with child, notwithstanding all her protestations of innocence, she was by her father shut up, and condemned to starve. But being maintained alive with fruit conveyed to her by Cybele, she was in due time delivered of a son, who, being exposed by his grandfather's order, was privately taken up by one Phorbus, and nursed with goats milk; whence he was called Attis, the word Attagos, in the Phrygian dialect, signifying a goat. As he grew up, he proved a most beautiful youth, and was on that score greatly favoured both by Cybele and Acdestis; nay, Midas, king of Phrygia, then residing at Pessinus, was so taken with him, that he designed to bestow on him his only daughter, by name Ia. The day appointed for the nuptials being come, Midas, to prevent any disturbance that other suitors might create, caused the gates of the city to be shut and well guarded. But no gates or guards could keep out the great mother of the gods, who being stung with jealousy, presented herself at the gate of the royal palace, with the walls of the city, and
all

Year of the
flood 1713,
before Christ
635.

Year of the
flood 1713,
before Christ
635.

all their turrets, on her head; whence she was ever after pictured with a crown of towers on her head. At the same time came Accestis, who, inspiring with an enthusiastic frenzy, all who assisted at the fatal nuptials, changed the genial banquet into a scene of horror and confusion. The unhappy bridegroom, in the height of his fury, emasculating himself under a pine tree, soon after died of the wound; the bride, laying violent hands on herself, accompanied her spouse to the shades. Accestes and Cybele, drenched in tears, long bewailed the untimely and cruel death of their beloved Attis, and Jupiter, having at their joint intreaties, exempted his body from corruption, a magnificent temple was erected to his memory in Pessinus.

Cybele had her peculiar priests, ceremonies, and sacrifices: The ceremonies performed by the priests in honour of this goddess, were: First, At stated times they used to carry her statue about the streets, dancing and skipping round it; and after having with violent gesticulations, worked themselves up

to the height of frenzy, they began to cut and slash their bodies with knives and lancets, appearing seized with a divine fury. This ceremony was performed in commemoration of the grief wherewith Cybele was transported at the death of her beloved Attis. Secondly, A pine tree is yearly wrapped up in wool, and with great solemnity carried by the priests into the temple of the goddess, in memory of her wrapping up, after the same manner, the dead body of Attis, and carrying it to her cave: On these occasions the priests were crowned with violets, which were supposed to have sprung from the blood of Attis, when he had laid violent hands on himself. At Rome, a sow was yearly sacrificed, and the ceremony performed by a priest and priestess, sent for out of Phrygia on that occasion.

Year of the
flood 1713,
before Christ
635.

Her priests were all eunuchs; this the great goddess required of them in memory of Attis; the waters of the river Gallus, when plentifully drank, were believed to inspire them with such a frantic enthusiasm, as to perform the operation on themselves, without

Year of the
flood 1713,
before Christ
635.

the least reluctance. They were not allowed to drink wine, because Attis, overcome with that liquor, disclosed his amours with Acdestris, which he had ever before concealed with the utmost care. They abstained from bread, in commemoration of the long fast which Cybele kept after the death of the same Attis. They held oaths to be unlawful on all occasions, which ~~tenet~~ some tell us, was common to all the Phrygians: The priests were placed, after their death, on a stone ten cubits high. Though the Romans possessed a great veneration for Cybele, yet we find that they looked upon her priests as the very refuse of mankind, of which we have a signal instance in Valerius Maximus, who tells us, that an eunuch of Cybele, having by a decree of the pretor been admitted to the possession of an estate, that had been bequeathed him, Mamercus Emilius Lepidus, at that time consul, being appealed to, reversed the decree of the pretor, adding thereto, that an eunuch, as being neither man nor woman, could not enjoy any privileges of that nature. This judgment Valerius Maximus extols, as a decree worthy of

Mamer-

Mamercus, worthy of one that was at the head of the senate, since it put a stop to the appearing of eunuchs in the courts of judicature, and defiling the tribunals with their unhallowed presence, under pretence of suing for justice.

Year of the
flood 1713,
before Christ
635.

They, like other religions of old, had their idols, deities, sacrifices, temples, altars, and we read likewise of some dances and songs, used in solemnizing the festivals of their gods: but enough has been said of them, without tiring the reader.

No. XVII.

The Religion of the Trojans.

Year of the
flood 1164,
before Christ
1184.

AS to the religion of the Trojans, it was in substance hardly different from the inhabitants of Greater Phrygia, which I have already described.

Their principal deities seemed to have been Cybele, or as they stiled her, the Great Mother of the Gods ; who according to the common opinion, was brought into Troas from Crete, by Teucer, lord of that island, and the progenitor of the Trojans ;* she was chiefly worshipped on the hills of Ida, Dindymus, Berecynthus, and Cybele, whence she borrowed her name : Apollo, who had

a tem-

* Virgil, book iii.

a temple in the citadel of Troy, called Pergamus; in this temple, and by this god, Homer feigns, that Æneas was concealed, till the wounds he had received in an encounter with Diomedes, were cured by Latona and Diana, Apollo's mother and sister: Minerva or Pallas, from whose temple Virgil pathetically describes Cassandra dragged by the victorious Greeks, while the city was in flames.*

Year of the
flood 1164,
before Christ
1184.

• Æneid 2d.

G 3

No.

No. XVIII.

Year of the
flood 1638,
before Christ,
710.

The Religion of the Medes.

AS to the religion of the Medes, it was much the same with that of the *Perfians*, wherefore I shall defer what may be said of it, till I come to the religion of the *Perfians*, from the Oriental writers. In respect of their *laws* I shall only observe, that when a law was once enacted, it was not in the king's power to repeal it, or to reverse a decree he had once made : whence the laws of the Medes are, in Holy Writ, called unchangeable.*

I shall

* Daniel, chap. vi. ver. 8.

I shall defer the religion of the Medes without any further discussion, to the next *chapter*, concerning that of the Persians, and shall there make abundant amends for the seeming deficiency in *this*.

Year of the
flood 1638,
before Christ
710.

No. XIX.

The Religion of the Persians.

THERE is hardly any subject which hath employed the pens of authors, ancient or modern, that deserves to be treated with greater accuracy, or to be read with more attention, than this, which I am now about

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

to discuss. The religion of the Persians, if we may credit the most learned and industrious writers,* is venerable from its antiquity, and worthy of admiration, from its having subsisted now some thousand years, in as great, or greater purity, than any other religion known to us at this day. But the accounts which are still extant, of the religion of the ancient Persians, are far from corresponding exactly; and the description which modern travellers have given us of those who profess this religion in Persia and India, even in our time, differ so widely, though not indeed in essential articles, that it requires no small degree of patience to separate the ore from the dross; and to present the reader with what is worthy of being known and believed, among heaps of fables and misrepresentations.

If we had still any considerable collection of the ancient Persian records, we should doubtless find in them what would satisfy us, as to the primitive doctrines of their wise men;

* Connect. of the Hist. of the Old and New Testament, by Dean Prideaux, vol. 1. p. 299.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

men ; but as these are most of them, either long since destroyed, or at least hidden from us, we must be content to follow such lights as yet remain ; and where we cannot make the reader understand things as clearly as we would, it is our duty, however, to make them as clear as we can. This is certain, that the Persians have preserved the worship of one God, and other essential articles of true religion, * through a long course of years, without suffering themselves to be drawn over by fraud, or submitting through force to any new faith, though they have so often changed their masters : a thing very singular, and in some sort commendable, if we consider how much they have been depressed since the death of Yezdegherd, the last king of their own religion, and the opprobrious treatment they have met with from the Mohammedans, who are wont to call them and Christians, with like contempt, Infidels ; though the principles of the former, as well as the latter, are far more reasonable than the ill connected legends of the Arabian

* Religious Hist. of the Old Persians, chap. 33.

Year of the
flood 1749
before Christ
599.

Arabian impostor; and though the modern Persians (taking that proper name in a religious, not a civil sense) are unanimously acknowledged * to be as honest, as charitable, and inoffensive people, as any upon earth.

So that in God's due time, we have just reason to believe they will, at last, acknowledge the truth of the Gospel Dispensation, and be included within the pale of the Christian church.

The original inhabitants of Persia descended from Elam, the son of Shem, and from these two patriarchs, it is most probable, they derived the true religion, which at first flourished among them with the utmost purity, but in process of time, was corrupted by an intermixture of superstitious rites, and heretical opinions, at such time as the rest of the Oriental nations were overspread with that deluge of false religion, which generally goes under the name of Zabüsm. From this it is affirmed, by some ancient authors, † they

* Connection of the Old and New Testament † Religious Hist.
of the Ancient Persians, chap. 2 and 3.

they were thoroughly recovered by the Patriarch Abraham, who, they say, undertook the reformation of their religion; and having freed it, as well from the pernicious doctrines they had imbibed, as from the superfluous ceremonies they had adopted; left it them once more in its pure and primitive condition, and simplicity, wherein he transmitted it to his own descendants. * But if this were so, they were a second time corrupted and engaged, if not in idolatrous practices, yet in suspicious acts of reverence to the heavenly bodies, and in practices inconsistent with the true faith.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

However the splendor of their religion might be darkened with these spots, yet it was never so far obscured as to admit any degree of comparison between it and the worship of the neighbouring nations (excepting the Jews), for the Persians continued zealous adorers of one all-wise and omnipotent God, whom they held to be infinite and omnipresent; so that they could
not

* Connection of the Old and New Testament, part 1, book iv.
page 25, octavo.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

not bear that he should be represented by either molten or graven images; or that the creator and lord of the universe should be circumscribed within the narrow bound of temples.* On this account they overturned the statues and places of public worship among the Greeks, as unworthy of the Deity, and not, as they have been falsely charged by the Greeks, from any sacrilegious contempt of the gods of any other country. In the decline, indeed, of the ancient Persian empire, the worship of Venus was introduced by one of the princes, but it was condemned by the Magi,† who remained firm to this great article of their faith—There is one God; and took care to transmit it religiously to their posterity.

The only objection to which the ancient and modern Persians have rendered themselves liable, flows from the respect which they have constantly paid to fire, and to the sun: yet if this matter be seriously and impartially considered, it will be found, that there

* Religious History of the Ancient Persians, page 3.

† Ibid. p. 90.

there is nothing of idolatry in this respect of theirs, but that they only worship God in the fire, and not fire as a God. That they should have an extraordinary veneration for the element of fire, and make choice rather of it, than of any of the rest, to be the symbol of the divine nature, will appear less extraordinary, if we consider, that a never dying fire was kept on the altar of burnt offerings at Jerusalem; * that God revealed himself to Moses by a flame in a bush; † and chose to testify his presence in the host of Israel by a pillar of fire, which went before them in the night, and which appeared only as a column of smoke in the day. ‡ As to their veneration of the sun, it is founded on their belief, that he is the noblest creature of the Almighty visible to us, and that his throne is placed therein. Nor need we wonder either at the mistakes of ancient writers, or at the stories told us by some Mohammedan authors on this head, since it was very

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

* 2 Chron. chap. vii. ver. 1.—Levit. chap. x. v. 1. † Exodus, chap. iii. v. 2.—Acts, chap. vii. v. 30. ‡ Exodus, chap. xiii. v. 21. Numbers, chap. xiv. ver. 14.—Nehemiah ix. ver. 19.—1 Corinth. chap. x. ver. 1.—Psalm lxxviii. ver. 14.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

very difficult for them to get a true knowledge of the religious tenets and customs of this people, because they were forbidden by their legislator, Zoroaster, as appears from the book Sadder, to teach either their ancient language, or its character, to strangers, or to instruct them in their religion.* If any further regard had been had to the sun in ancient times, it would certainly have descended with the other parts of their religion, to the modern Persians: but that it never reached them, the learned and judicious Doctor Hyde assures us; for an intimate friend of his, being by him requested to inquire concerning the worship of Mithra (so the Persians call the sun) he accordingly asked some of the priests of the Persians settled in India, at what seasons, and with what ceremonies they adored the sun? They answered, that they never adored the sun, or paid any sort of divine honours to that luminary, to the moon, or to the planets; but only turned themselves towards the sun when praying, because they looked upon it to come nearest to

* Religious History of the ancient Persians, p. 5.—Leviticus, chap. xxvi. ver. 1.

to the nature of fire. The same excellent author observes, that among the precepts of Zoroaster, his disciples are directed to pay daily to the sun, certain salutations, consisting only in words, (and those too addressed to God) without any mention of worship by bowing of the body.

Year of the
flood 1749.
before Christ
599.

Yet if any custom of this sort prevails, it ought not to be interpreted as a mark of idolatrous adoration: for the Persian Moham-medans, who are zealous detesters of that impiety, and the Arminians, who dwell in Persia, are wont to pray in like manner, the latter making the sign of the cross, and bowing profoundly low at the sight of the rising sun. To say the truth, adoration, that is prostrating, or bowing the body, was, even among the Hebrews, a civil, as well as religious rite, when applied to God or man. An eminent Rabbi says, that this, as an act of devotion, was not to be performed out of the sanctuary, that is, out of the temple: it is forbid by the second commandment, to be paid to idols; but, as a civil rite, the Jews were at liberty thus to testify their respect

Year of the
flood 1749
before Christ
599

spect to angels, and to persons of very high dignity. On the whole therefore, there can be no more reason to suspect these Persians of Idolatry on this account, than any other of the Oriental nations, since the sun is no more than the point of adoration of the Persians, as the temple of Jerusalem was to the Jews; and that of Mecca is to the Moham-medans, who in this respect, are so scrupulous, that they have tables to determine the bearing of Mecca, * from whatever place they are in. As to the notions which the Persians have of the sun, they are not perfectly agreed in them; some believing the throne of God placed therein, and that it is the seat of paradise; others entertaining a different opinion as to paradise, but praying, nevertheless, towards the sun, as a symbol of the deity, on account of its purity. It is farther certain, that the Persians never called Mithra a God, or ascribed to it any name of the Divinity; and so far from directing any petitions thereto, they constantly began and ended the ejaculations pronounced before the sun,

* Religious Hist. of the ancient Persians, page 95.

sun with the praises of the most high God, to whom alone their prayers are addressed.*

Year of the
flood 1601
before Christ
747.

As to the fire, before which the Persians, taking that word in an extended sense, they acknowledge nothing of divinity therein: but esteeming it a symbol of the Deity, they first prostrate themselves before it, then standing up, they pray to God. Thus, among the ruins of the ancient palace, at Persepolis, there are seen many marble statues of kings standing praying to God before the figures of the sun and fire, which are also placed on the wall before them; only one figure is seen kneeling, with the same symbols before it as the rest. As the fire in the temple was reputed sacred among the Jews, so the Persians might, from them, take this custom of praying before sacred fires, which is the more likely, since it was the manner of God's chosen people to prostrate themselves before the altar, and then to offer up their petitions. It was also a custom among the Persians, to tender oaths before the fire upon the altar, in which also they agreed

H

with

* Religious Hist. of the Ancient Persians, chap. 5.

Year of the
flood 1601,
before Christ
747.

with the Jews, as they did farther, in offering their victims and other offerings; and in preserving it from being polluted by impure fuel, in which last case the Persians went so far as to punish offenders with death. Their kings also, and principal persons, were wont sometimes to feed the sacred fires, with precious oils and rich aromatics: but still, all things done to or by fire, were performed to the honour of God, and terminated solely in him; at least, if we may credit the Persian writers yet remaining, or the testimony of those who still profess this religion.

There is yet another point in which the Persians are to be vindicated, before we can leave the learned reader satisfied that they never were idolaters. It is this: they had amongst them, after the time of Zoroaster's reformation of their religion, certain caves, adorned not only with figures of the sun, but of the planets, and other heavenly bodies, which symbolical representations were called Mithriac figures, and were afterwards introduced into other nations, where they became objects of idolatrous worship; but they were

far from being so among the Persians, who were a wise and well instructed people, for with them they served only as mathematical symbols for preserving the true system of the universe, to which end, and to no other, they were used, and perhaps invented by Zoroaster himself.*

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

Having thus shewn in general, the nature of the Persian religion, and that it was far preferable to any of the systems received in other nations, either in the East, or in the West, the Jews excepted, we shall proceed to shew what the Persians themselves have taught concerning the establishment of their religion, as well as what are the doctrines as to essential points universally received among them.

The great fame of Abraham, which from a concurrence of various causes, had diffused itself through the whole east, induced the Persians, as well as the Zabians, to ascribe the system of doctrines received by them to that venerable patriarch, styling their faith

H 2

at

* Doctor Hyde's sentiments of the Ancient Persians, chap. 4. p. 118.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

at all times Kish-Abraham. They likewise ascribe the books which they hold sacred, to this father of the faithful; and as much believe him to be the author of their Sofh or bible, as we believe the gospel to have come to us from Christ, or the Mohammedans, that God revealed to Mohammed his Koran.* In attributing books to Abraham, they agree with the Jews, and with the Mohammedans, the latter ascribing to him no less than ten treatises, perhaps all with the like reason. The Persians say farther, that Abraham, while he resided among them, dwelt in the city of Balch, which they, from thence, stile the city of Abraham. But though it must be allowed that the old Persian religion agreed in many great points with the religion of Abraham; and though it should be admitted, that his fame might even in his life time, be, with very advantageous circumstances, published throughout all Persia; yet it is so far from being evident, that it is scarce probable, he went himself into that country, much less that he executed the office of a prophet there, and resided at Balch.

On

* Dr. Hyde, chap. 2. page 28.

On the contrary, it is far more credible that this notion took rise from the suggestion of Zoroaster, who had his learning, and his divinity, out of the book of Moses, and other sacred books among the Jews: and that the city of Balch received the appellation of the city of Abraham from Zoroaster, on account of his making it the residence of the Archimagus or high priest, of the religion of Abraham, and not from that patriarch's being supposed to live there at all, in ancient times.†

Year of the
flood 1749
before Christ
599.

Though fire was held the symbol of the divinity among the Persians, yet the other elements were also highly honoured by them, insomuch that the Greeks, and other foreigners, who knew not their religious principles, called them worshippers of the elements, which was a flagrant calumny, since all the respect they paid them arose from their conceiving them to be the first seeds of all things; wherefore they studied, by every method possible, to preserve each of them in its primi-

H 3

tive

† Connect. of the Old and New Test. part i. book iv. p. 225.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

tive purity. On this account they prevented, as much as they could, the air from being infected by ill smells; and for their officiousness on this head, Herodotus, * according to his usual custom, represents them as believing the air a deity.

They hold, † says he, the whole expanse to be Jupiter. That they might in like manner preserve the earth from impurities, they would not bury their dead therein, but suffer them to be devoured by birds and wild beasts, that, finding a tomb in their bowels, they might not infect the air. ‡ In fine, the preserving all the elements pure, was by them esteemed an act of high piety, and as such, merited the divine favour in this world, and in the world to come; for in all things they were great affectors of cleanliness, and studious in an especial manner, of avoiding whatever might pollute them. Fire and water, however, were, in a peculiar manner, the objects of their care, because they were most liable to be contaminated; and hence

* Herodotus, book i. chap. 131. † Ibid.

‡ Dr. Hyde, chap. iii.

hence the Greeks, mistaking the degree of reverence they paid them, declared them, without scruple, worshippers of those elements, and tell us formal stories of the sacrifices offered to both. It is very true, that kings often do extravagant things, and such as are contrary to the civil and religious laws of the countries they govern; so that it is not impossible that some of the Persian princes might be guilty of what is laid to their charge: but it is not likely, because the Persians universally held, that whoever wilfully polluted, either fire or water, deserved death in this world, and everlasting punishment in that to come; and that, whoever threw the bones of dead creatures into waters, were certainly damned. For these reasons, the Magi, wherever they were, took care to have all the waters in their neighbourhood watched, assigning them keepers, whose sole office it was to look carefully to this matter, and to see that no filthy thing was thrown into them; and for this they had stated salaries: for abhorring, as they did, to represent the Almighty Lord of Heaven and Earth, by artificial images of stone or metal; they

Year of the
flood 1749;
before Christ

599.

Year of the
flood 1749
before Christ
599.



chose to preserve fire and water in their utmost purity, that they might serve as symbols of the divine nature, and put them in mind of the infinite purity of God. As they held the ministration of angels, so they believed that one of these celestial guards was appointed to watch over the waters in general. This angel they called Ardisur or Arduifur, for whom a particular salutation was prescribed; the title of which, in their ancient books, runs thus: *Hymn to Ardisur, for the benefits received from the sea, rivers, wells, and fountains.* In this hymn they praised him for taking care of all these places, and prayed that he might continue so to do, returning God thanks for the various uses made of water, and the mighty advantages resulting to mankind, from his wise disposition thereof throughout the earth. They were of opinion, that in Paradise such people were peculiarly blessed, as had been cautious of defiling water, and had, in this sense, preserved a respect for that element, during their lives; for which cause they recommended the care of this element, as well as fire, to their women, that is, their private fires, and the

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

the waters used in their houses : for it does not appear that they ever admitted women to minister in religious matters, except in the mysteries of Venus ; which, as we observed before, was an heresy, and as such, detested by the orthodox magians. This love to purity, and especial regard to water, may stand sufficiently justified by the practice of the Jews, and the precepts in their law, for corporal purification, as well as by the great advantage of preserving cleanliness in those excessive hot climates ; especially if we consider, that in washing the hands, &c. and putting on the garments, they were bound to use solemn forms of prayer, as indeed, there were set ejaculations to be used in the most ordinary actions of human life.*

With respect to the use they made of fire, in their national religion, the priests, who attended it, by no means deserved the appellation of *ignarii sacerdotes*, or fire priests, for they were truly *sacerdotes Dei*, priests of the Almighty, who, though like the Jewish priests, they waited on, and took care to preserve

* Dr. Hyde, chap. vi. page 137.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

preserve the sacred fire from being extinguished, were far from making this their only duty; for these, as well as those, read every day public prayers, and did other sacerdotal offices; yet such has been the hard fate of these people, that because their principles were not known, and their ceremonies ill understood, they have been branded with the name of fire worshippers; so dangerous a thing it is to carry to any excess, even innocent ceremonies. They never confessed their sins to any, but to God, nor besought a remission of them from any, but from him; yet they inclined to perform these public acts of devotion, before the symbol of the Deity, that is, before fire, or before the sun, as the witness of their actions. In like manner the Jews confessed their sins to God in the temple, the fire flaming on the altar near them, so that there was nothing of idolatry in this, though it might not be altogether free from superstition.

In the most ancient times the Persians had no temples at all, but reared altars, whereon they preserved their sacred fires on the tops
of

of mountains, and other solitary places.* It was Zoroaster who persuaded them, for the sake of preserving these fires more conveniently, to erect over each of them a *pyreum*, or fire temple; but this had no relation to Mithra, or the sun, towards whom they could better testify their respect in the open air: neither did it subvert their ancient principle, that the lord of the universe ought not to be inclosed within walls; for their *pyrea* did not circumscribe what they esteemed an image or semblance of the divinity, but only the symbol of his purity, and as it were, a shadow of his nature. The overturning therefore of the Greek temples, by Xerxes, and other acts of a like nature, were perfectly consistent with their reverence for fire, and their respect for the sun. Of this, though many Greek and Oriental writers were entirely ignorant, and were consequently prone to misrepresent them, yet authors of great candour, and more extensive knowledge, have readily assented to it, and testified, to the honour of the Persians, that they worshipped

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

* Herodotus, book i. chap. 131.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

shipped only one God, without representing him by any image or picture whatsoever.

The Persians in early times, acknowledged one eternal and omnipotent being, the creator and preserver of all things; him they called Yezad, Izad, or Izud; also Ormuzd, Hormuz or Hormizda: joining this with the modern name, they say Hormizda Choda, O supreme God. They acknowledged also, an evil created being, whom they stiled Ahariman, Abreman, or Abriman, which signifies amongst them the devil. To shew their detestation of this wicked being, he was detested as the implacable and perpetual enemy of mankind, they maintained an everlasting enmity against him and all his works. The modern Persians call the devil div.*

Some have asserted that the ancient Persians held a co-eternity of these two principles; but writers better acquainted with the true tenets of this nation, agree, that Ahariman was created out of darkness, and that Oromasdes first subsisted alone; that by him the

* Hyde, cha q. xi. 13.

the light and darkness were created ; and that in the composition of this world, good and evil are mixed together, and so shall continue till the end of all things, when each shall be separated, and reduced to its own sphere.* A very ingenious and inquisitive author has given us a long account of the doctrines of Zoroaster very conformable to what has already been said, and agreeing perfectly well with the religion of the ancient Patriarchs, except in a few strokes of fable, which were either inserted by the mistake of the reporter of that abstract, or were invented by Zerdusht, to account for those things which surpass human understanding.†

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

Some have endeavoured to account for the origin of the prince of darkness thus : Oromasdes, say they, said once within his mind, how shall my power appear, if there be nothing to oppose me ? This reflection called Abriman into being, who thenceforward opposed all the designs of God, and thereby, in spite of himself, contributes to his glory. The souls of men, according to them, were at

* Plutarch.

† Ibid.

Year of the
flood, 1749
before Christ
599.

at first unbodied spirits; but the Almighty resolving to make use of them in warring against Abriman, cloathed them with flesh, promising them that the light should never forsake them till Abriman and all his servants were subdued; after which the resurrection of the dead is to follow, with the separation of the light from the darkness, and the coming of the kingdom of peace. To say the truth, the notions they have of the beginning of all things, the state of our first parents, the attempts made on them by the prince of darkness, the last judgment, the salvation of the good, and the punishments of the bad, differ very little from what is delivered to us in the Scripture, on these heads, only they have a long account of the war between God and the author of evil, which they say ended in a complete victory gained over the latter, and his adherents, who were constrained to surrender at discretion: that the Almighty did not annihilate his enemies, because, without opposition, his attributes could not have appeared with such lustre as they now do: that the world had existed three thousand years before this decisive battle, the whole

whole of its duration being fixed to twelve thousand: that after this defeat, God, by holding up three fingers, gave the evil one leave to chuse which three thousand years, of the nine thousand yet to come, he would please to take, wherein to trouble and vex mankind; whereupon he chose the middlemost. Before, say they, this power was given to Abriman, man lived in a state of innocence; but that since his fall, war, and all other evils have been introduced; that these, however, shall, in time, pass away, and man live again, for a certain space, in peace and glory. They place the day of judgment at the end of twelve thousand years: and as to the damned, they assert, that they shall be punished according to the heinousness of their crimes, two angels being appointed to be the inspectors of their sufferings. At last, however, even these are to be pardoned; but never to be admitted to the joys of the blessed, but to remain in a certain place by themselves, and to wear in their foreheads a black mark, as a badge of that state, from whence, through the mercy of God, they were freed.*

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

The

* Hyde, c. 9.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

The point in which the Persians differ most from us is, as to the manner of God's creating the world, which they say, happened not in six days, but in six seasons, each season containing many days; the first of these they stile Mid-yuzeram, containing forty-two days; in this, say they, the heavens were created, with things belonging to them; the second day they stile Mid-yusham, containing sixty days, wherein the waters were created; the third is by them named Piti-shahim, including seventy-five days, in which the earth was made; the fourth they called Iyaferam, including thirty days, wherein were made the trees; the fifth goes under the name of Midiyarim, containing eighty days, in which all living creatures received being. The last they stile Hamespitamidim, comprehending seventy-five days, wherein was made man.†

It is now time to speak of the rites and ceremonies of the Persians, ancient and modern, in the exercise of their religion, and every thing relating thereto. They have a regular clergy, and are very zealous in assert-

† Lord's Religion of the Perses, chap. viii. p. 41.

Year of the
flood 1749.
before Christ
599.

asserting an uninterrupted succession of persons, instructed in their sacred mysteries, from the time of Zerdusht to this day. Their ordinary priests are obliged to live according to certain rules, much more severe than those given to the laity, their high priests were under still stricter obligations, and all of them bound to discharge their sacerdotal offices, with mighty exactness and devotion.* As to their public worship, it was, and is still thus performed: In every Pyreum or fire temple, there stood an altar, on which burnt the sacred fire, which was always kept alive by the priest: when the people assembled, in order to their devotions, the priest put on a white habit and a mitre, with a gauze or cloth, passing before his mouth, that he might not breathe on the holy element: thus he read certain prayers out of the Liturgy which he held in one hand, speaking very softly, and in a whispering sort of tone; holding in his left hand certain small twigs of a sacred tree, which, as soon as the service was over, he threw into the fire. At these times all who were present put up
I their

* Lord's Account of the Persian Religion.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

their prayers to God, for such things as they stood in need of; and, when prayers were finished, the priest and people withdrew silently, and with all other tokens of awful respect. All these rites are still observed; but to prevent as far as possible, the people from falling into idolatry, the priest now informs them, when they are going from their devotions, of the reasons why they worship before the fire, and all the obligations they are under to treat it with reverence.

This exhortation runs usually in these words:

• Forasmuch as fire was delivered to Zer-
• dush, by the Almighty, as the symbol of
• his majesty; wherefore it was required
• that we should esteem it holy, and respect
• it as an emanation from the fountain of
• light; and that we should love all things
• which resemble it, especially the sun and
• moon, the two great witnesses of God,
• the sight of which should put us in mind
• of his omniscience; therefore let us, with-
• out superstition, keep the command given
• us, evermore praising God, for the great
useful-

' usefulness of this element; and beseech-
 ' ing him to make us always bear in mind
 ' the obligations we are under, to do our
 ' duty towards him; which is as necessary
 ' to the health and happiness of the soul, as
 ' light and fire are to the ease and welfare of
 ' the body.'*

Year of the
 flood 1749,
 before Christ
 599.

They keep yearly six festivals, each of
 five days continuance, in memory of the six
 seasons, wherein all things were created
 after each of these feasts, they keep a fast of
 five days, in memory of God's resting five
 days, as they believe at each of those seasons.
 As often as they eat, either flesh, fowl, or
 fish, they carry a small part of it to the
 temple, as an offering to God, beseeching
 him that he would pardon them for taking
 away the lives of his creatures, in order to
 their own subsistence. They have none of
 those out of the way notions, relating to
 cleanness and uncleanness in meats, which ex-
 pose some religions to ridicule; but as they
 are a very complaisant, as well as inoffensive
 people, they abstain from swines flesh, and

I 2

from

* Beauchamp's Essays on Important Subjects. Sect. 3.

Year of the
flood 1749
before Christ
599.

from the flesh of kine, that they may neither offend the Mohammedans nor the Banians, among whom they are obliged to live: they eat alone for the sake of purity and cleanliness; they likewise drink every man out of his own cup.*

When their children are initiated into their religion, they send for a priest; and this is usually done as soon as the child is born. The priest calculates its nativity; afterwards he asks what name is to be given it. This being agreed on by the father and its relations, the priest tells it to its mother, who then says; my child is called so or so; with which the ceremony ends at that time. The child is afterwards carried to the Pyreum, where the priest first pours some water into the rind of a holy tree, thence into the mouth of the child, beseeching God to cleanse the tender infant, from whatever seeds of corruption it may have received from its father, and from the impurities derived from its mother. At seven years of age the child is

* Lord's Religion of the Persians, page 40. Hyde's Religion of the Ancient Persians, chap. 29.

Year of the
flood 1749
before Christ
599.

led to church, to be confirmed there; the priest teaches him some prayers, and instructs him in the first principles of religion.

These are repeated daily, till he is well acquainted with the articles of his faith: then he is permitted to pray, for the first time, before the holy fire; after which the priest gives him water to drink, and a pomegranate leaf to chew: then he causes the lad to wash his body with clean water; after which he puts on a linen cassock next his skin, which descends below his waist, and is girt with a girdle of camels hair, woven by the priest's own hands. These ceremonies over, the priest blesses him, bids him to be a true Persee all the days of his life, to beware of falling into idolatry, or breaking any of the precepts given by Zerdusht.*

Of their marriages we are told, by a very intelligent author, that they have five sorts: First, That of children in their minority: Secondly, That of widowers with a second wife: Thirdly, Of such persons as marry

I 3

by

* Lord's Religion of the Persees, page 45. Hyde's Religion of the Ancient Persians, chap. 34.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

by their own choice : Fourthly, The marriage of the dead, which is occasioned by an opinion they have entertained, that married people are peculiarly happy in the other world : wherefore when a young person dies in celibacy, they hire one to be married to *him* or *her*, which ceremony is performed a little after the burial. The last kind of marriage is, where a person adopts either a son or a daughter, and then gives *him* or *her* in marriage ; which is also founded on a religious opinion, that all men ought to leave heirs behind them, either natural or adopted. As to the ceremonies made use of on this occasion, they are very singular, but at the same time, have nothing in them wild or irrational : the parties designing to contract matrimony, are seated together on a bed, about midnight : opposite to them stand two priests, the one for the man, the other for the woman, holding rice in their hands, to intimate the fruitfulness which they wish the new married couple ; on each hand of the priests stand the relations of the bride and bridegroom. Things being in this situation, the bridegroom's priest lays his fore finger on the

the woman's forehead, and says, Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband? The woman assenting, her priest lays his fore finger on the man's forehead and asks the like question: which being answered in the affirmative, the parties then join hands; the man promises that he will provide her a suitable maintenance, the woman acknowledges that all she has is his; the priests then scatter rice over them, wishing that they may be fruitful, and beseeching God that they may have many sons and daughters, that they may live in unity of mind, and arrive at a good old age, in possession of all the joys of wedlock. The ceremony over, the woman's parents pay the dowry, and a feast of eight days is kept for joy of the marriage.*

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

As to their burials, two things are remarkable: first, the place; secondly, the manner. First, as to the place, they have a round tower erected, on the top of which the bodies of the dead are laid, to be devoured by the fowls of the air: some affirm that they have separate towers for the good and

I 4

for

* Lord's Religion of the Perfects, p. 49.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

for the bad ; others, that men, women, and children, are placed on several towers. The reason of thus exposing them, is, the preserving the elements pure ; for they conceive, that by not interrering the dead, they avoid polluting the earth, and by leaving the corpse unprotected from birds of prey, they provide in some measure against the infection of the air. However this custom was anciently esteemed so barbarous by other nations, that one of the apologists * for the Christian faith, speaking of the good effects it had on mens' minds, in reforming them from brutal and wicked habits, mentions this expressly ; that the Persians, since they had received the Christian doctrines, no more exposed the bodies of their dead, but afforded them a decent burial. Before I take my leave of the religion of the Persians, of which I hope my readers will not think I have dwelt with too much prolixity, it may not be amiss to observe what is practised among them, when a man is on his death bed : A priest is in such a case always sent for, and he, drawing near the

* Theodor de curand Græc. affectib. serm. 9. de leg. page 128.

the bed, prayeth thus, in the ear of the sick man.

Year of the
Hood 1749,
before Christ
599.

‘ O Almighty Lord, thou hast command-
‘ ed we should not offend thee; this man
‘ hath offended: thou hast ordained that we
‘ should do good; yet this man hath done
‘ evil: thou hast required that we should
‘ duly and exactly worship thee; which,
‘ however, this man hath neglected. Now
‘ O merciful God, at the hour of death,
‘ forgive him his offences, his misdeeds, and
‘ his neglects, and receive him to thy self.’

When he is dead, the priest comes not
near him; but the corpse is put on an iron
bier, and carried to the place of interment,
the bearers being forbid to speak, as they go
along, out of decency, and also, because in
the grave, there is an unbroken silence: the
dead body being placed on the tower, the
priest, standing at a distance, performeth the
funeral service, which he concludes thus:
‘ This our brother, while he lived, consisted
‘ of the four elements; now he is dead, let
‘ each

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

‘ each take his own ; ‘ earth to earth, air to
‘ air, water to water, fire to fire.’

They suppose that the spirit wanders for three days after its departure from the body, and is in that space pursued and tormented by the devil, till it is able to reach their sacred fire, to which he cannot come. They therefore pray morning, noon, and night, during these three days, for the soul of their deceased brother, beseeching God to blot out his sins, and to cancel all his offences : on the fourth day, supposing his fate to be decided, they make a great feast, which closes the ceremonies used on this occasion.*

Thus much I have thought necessary to say on this copious and controverted subject, chiefly to justify the much misrepresented Persees from the charge of so senseless an idolatry, as the worshipping either the luminaries, planets, or elements. To have enlarged more upon it, would have led me too far ; the curious reader, may however from
the

* Lord's Religion of the Persees, p. 49.

the authors quoted (at the bottom of each page), collect himself such a system of the Persee religion, both with relation to their doctrine and practices, as will amply reward all his pains and study.

Year of the
flood 1749,
before Christ
599.

No.

No. XX.

The Religion of the Ancient Celtes.

THOUGH the Celtes exceed all other nations in antiquity, their descent being from the eldest son of Japhet, who was the eldest son of Noah, in which respect they outgo the Egyptians and Phrygians (before treated of) and even the Scythians (which I shall speak of in my next chapter) yet it must be owned that our knowledge of their government, laws, religion, &c. come vastly short of the two first; whether it be owing to the want of records, or rather to their migration into Europe, we are left a good deal in the dark, as to those particulars.

Their

Their religion was very like that of the Scythians, that is, they neither built temples, nor reared statues to the deity, which they esteemed so derogatory to it, that they even demolished them wherever they could, planting large spacious groves instead of them, which being open on the top and sides, were, in their opinion, more acceptable to the divine and unconfined Being which they adored. In this, their religion seems to have been *just* at first, and not unlike that of the Perses, and disciples of Zoroaster. They only differed from them in making the *oak*, instead of *fire*, the emblem of the deity, in chusing of that tree above all others, to plant their groves with; and attributing several supernatural virtues, both to its wood, fruit, leaves, and mistletoe, all which were made use of in their sacrifices, and other parts of their worship. At least, this is what appears to have been the notion and practice of their immediate descendants, the ancient Gauls and Germans, on each side of the Rhine.

But

But after they had adopted the idolatrous superstition of the Romans and other nations, and the apotheosis of their heroes and princes, they came to worship them much after the same manner: As Jupiter, under the name of Taran, which in the Celtic language signifies thunder: Mercury, whom some authors call Heus, or Hesus, probably from the Celtic Huadh, which signifies a dog, and might be the *Anubis latrans* of the Egyptians. But Mars was held in the greatest veneration by the warlike, and Mercury by the trading part. It will not however be easy to reconcile the greatest part of these Celtic deities, with what a late antiquary * says of them, with great probability, that they were originally kings of that nation.

In like manner we find the Cretans at once worshipping Jupiter, and shewing his sepulchre at the city of Gnosus; for which reason, while Calimachus calls them liars, for forging a tomb for that God, others, especially the Christian fathers, justly blamed their

* Pezron of the Antiquities of the Celts, chap. 15.

their folly, for adoring him as a deity, whom they acknowledged to be interred among them. How these gods, or at least their names, came to be adopted by other nations, may be seen in the history at large of those fabulous and heroic times, wherein the Celtes deified their kings, where we may see, likewise, how much they were addicted to all kinds of superstition, divination, astrology, magic, and other kind of witcheries.

The care of religion was immediately under the Curetes, since known by the name of Druids and Bards. These were, as Cæsar * tells us, the performers of sacrifices, and all religious rites, and expounders of religion to the people. They also instructed youth in all kind of learning, such as philosophy, astronomy, astrology, the immortality, and transmigration of the soul from one body to another, which was both an incitement to virtue, and an antidote against the fears of death. These they taught their disciples by word of mouth, esteeming them too sacred to be committed to writing.

Other

* De Bello Gal. lib. vi. chap. 12.

Other more common subjects, such as their hymns to their gods, the exploits of their princes and generals, and their exhortations to the people in time of war, especially before a battle, all these were couched in elegant verse, and sung by them upon all proper occasions. Though even these were also kept from vulgar eyes, and either committed to memory, or if to writing, the whole was a secret to all the laity: the latter seems indeed the most probable, if what Cæsar hints be true, that those poetic records were increased in his time to such a bulk, that it took up a young bard near twenty years to learn them by heart. Diodorus, speaking of the Celtes, tells us farther, that these poets used to accompany their songs with instrumental music, such as that of organs, harps, and the like; and that they were had in such veneration, that if any army was engaged in battle, if one of these poets or bards appeared, both sides immediately ceased fighting, so that their fury gave way to wisdom, and Mars to the muses. But the true reason was, that they were universally believed to be prophets, as well as poets,

poets, so that it was thought dangerous, as well as injurious, to disobey what they supposed came from their gods.

Their prophetic philosophers kept academies, which were resorted unto by a great number, not only of their own youth, but even of other countries, insomuch, that Aristotle says, that their philosophy passed from thence into Greece, and not from Greece thither. Diodorus quotes likewise a passage out of Hecateus; which is not less curious, and in their praise, viz. that their Druids or learned had some kind of instruments by which they could draw distant objects nearer, make them appear larger and plainer, and by which they could discover even seas, mountains, vallies, &c. in the moon, which shews that they must have made some great progress in that sort of learning above other nations. Other authors add many things in praise of their virtue and morality, but the Roman historians make no scruple to call their religion an impious one, and as such to be forbidden by Augustus, and abolished by Claudius. Lucan is no less

K

less severe against them ; and, though this might indeed, be partly attributed to the hatred which the Romans bore to them ; yet it must be owned that they adopted, in process of time, several barbarous customs, such as sacrificing human victims to their gods, as more acceptable to them, than those of any other animals. And Diodorus tells us of another inhuman custom they used in their divinations, especially in great matters, which was done by killing some of their slaves, or some prisoner of war, if they had any, with a scimeter, to draw their augury from the running of his blood from his mangled limbs. They were upbraided likewise by the Romans, with following the oldest law in the world, which ever gives to the strongest, what the weaker cannot defend.*

I shall conclude this with a general sketch of their character, though foreign to the scope of this work, yet will not lead my reader far out of his way. The character given to them by many ancient authors, with relation to their virtues and vices ; such, as
among

* Plutarch, in the Life of Camillus.

among the former, their extreme love of liberty, which made them prefer the worst of deaths to an ignominious slavery, which was no less common with the women than the men ; their faithfulness and love of justice, for which several Roman emperors chose them for their life guards, and most nations courted them for their allies, or auxiliaries : their very extraordinary hospitality, which obliged them to have their houses and tables free to all sorts of strangers ; their conjugal fidelity, respect to their parents, to their princes and chiefs : their unanimity, courage, and hardiness under all difficulties and dangers : and other such like social virtues, were peculiar to this people. But to balance these, they had their vices, among which were cruelty, superstition, fondness for, and extravagance in their feasting ; contempt of learning, and looking upon all those with contempt, that could either write or read, their degenerating into downright drunkenness, gluttony, and ferocity, and such like, with which we find them charged by Greek and Roman authors. But to do them some jus-

tice, those opposite characters rather relate to the Gauls, than to the old Celtes, their ancestors.

No. XXI.

The Religion of the Ancient Scythians.

THERE is little or nothing can be met with concerning the antiquity and origin of this nation. How soon they began to settle themselves into a regular government, is as impossible to guess, as of what kind it was. It appears, however, from Herodotus, that one or two tribes at least, that is, the royal and free Scythians, were under a monarchical one. In respect of their religion, we are likewise

likewise in the dark ; we know they worshipped a plurality of gods and goddesſes, but that, which they reckoned their principal deity, was Vesta, whom they called Tabiti. The two next were Jupiter, whom they colled Papeus, and Apia, or the earth, which they esteemed his wife. Jupiter, it seems, they challenged for their progenitor, and Vesta for their queen, as appears by the answer which one of their kings sent to Darius, when he came to subdue them to his empire.*

Besides these, they worshipped Apollo, the celestial Venus and Neptune. But their favourite God seems to be that of war, to whom alone they dedicated temples, altars, and images. How his temples were built, which Herodotus speaks of, he doth not tell us : neither is it easy for us to guess. It doth not even appear from any other ancient authors, or from any other monuments, that ever they built any properly so called. Groves indeed, and very sumptuous ones too, they were famous for erecting to the deity : In

K 3

these

* Herodotus, chap. 59.

these they affected to have one or more oaks, of a monstrous size, which were accounted so sacred, that it was sacrilege, and was punished with the severest death, to lop so much as a branch or sprig, or even to wound the bark. These they never failed to sprinkle plentifully with the blood of their victims, insomuch that the rind of some of the oldest of them was covered, or even encrusted with it; * we are therefore inclined to believe, that Herodotus, who learned these things by word of mouth, and had never seen them himself, might, for want of a good interpreter, mistake them for temples, and suppose them to be built like those of other nations.

They used to swear by the wind and the sword, the one as the author of *life*, and the other of *death*. Their altars were made of small wood tied up in bundles, and to cover three stades of land in length and breadth, though it was not proportionable in its height. The top of it, which was quadrangular, had three sides perpendicular, and the fourth

* Keyser's Antiquities, Dissertation 3.

fourth had a gradual declivity, to render the top of it easy of access. One hundred and fifty loads of faggots were to be brought yearly to each altar, to supply those which had been putrified by the inclemency of the winter. On the tops of each of these heaps was erected an old iron scimitar, which stood there as the image, or rather emblem of the deity. To him, besides all other cattle, in common with their other Gods, and in much greater number, they sacrificed horses, which were a martial creature; and what was more shocking, every hundredth man they took prisoner from their enemies. This last bloody offering was made by pouring a libation of wine upon the captive's head, after which they cut his throat, and received his blood into a bowl, with which ascending to the top of the altar, they went and washed the deity's sword. As to the victims, they cut off his right arm close to the shoulder, and throwing it up into the air, they left it exposed in the place where it fell, and the rest of the body in that where it was killed.*

K 4

With

* Herodotus, chap. 62.

With respect to their other victims, which they sacrificed either to Mars, or to any other deity, they observed the same rites, they brought the beast, having its fore-feet tied with a cord, and he who officiated as priest, coming behind, and taking hold of the cord, threw the victim down. Whilst it was falling: he called upon the deity, to whom it was offered, and then strangled it with a cord, which he twisted with a stick; and as soon as it was dead, he set about skinning it, and dressing it, without any ceremony. The flesh was put into pots, and whenever these were not ready at hand, into the paunch of the creature, mixing it with a proportionable quantity of water; and if wood could not be had, they burnt the bones instead of it. When the flesh was sufficiently boiled, the priest made an offering of part of the meat and intestines to the deity, by throwing it before the altar, and the rest was, we may suppose, bestowed to feast the priest and votaries. Of all beasts the horse was esteemed the noblest, and consequently the most acceptable victim. As for swine, they detested it, not only as unfit to eat, but even
to

to be suffered to live among them.* They took care also to offer to their gods, the first fruits of their cattle, ground, and of the spoils they took in war. Some considerable part of the latter, they were wont to send to the delphic Apollo: it was usually conveyed thither, by a number of their honourable virgins, under a sufficient escort. But the length and difficulty of the way, and the dangers, and other obstacles of the Journey, obliged them to discontinue it: This is all I can find remarkable concerning their religion.

* Herodotus, chap. 60, 61. 63,

No.

No. XXII.

The Religion of the Ancient Mysians.

AS to the origin of the Mysians,* Herodotus informs us that they were Lydians by descent, (whom I shall speak of in the next chapter); others derive them from the Phrygians, and tell us that Myfus was not a Lydian, but a Phrygian. There are divers other opinions touching the origin of these people, which it would be of no use to relate, as they are mostly founded on distorted and far fetched etymologies.

Their religion was much the same with that of the neighbouring Phrygians (already treated of), whom they did not fall short of
in

* Lib. i. chap. 94. et chap. 45. lib. iv.

in superstition. They worshipped the same deities, and used the same religious ceremonies, which has made some believe them to be originally Phrygians. Cybele had a stately and rich temple at Cyzicus, and Apollo Actæus, near Parium. Nemesis also is numbered among their deities, and was worshipped in a magnificent temple built by king Adrastus, not far from the city of Parium, whence, both the country, and goddess, were named Adrastia. Priapus was worshipped by the more modern Mysians, but unknown to them even in Hesiod's time. The Mysian priests abstained from flesh, and were not allowed to marry. It was a ceremony practised among them, to sacrifice a horse, and eat his entrails, before they were admitted to the priesthood.

No.

No. XXIII.

The Religion of the Ancient Lydians.

AS to the origin of the Lydians,* Josephus, and after him, all the ecclesiastical writers, derive them from Lud, Shem's fourth son. As this opinion has no other foundation but the similitude of names, some of the ancients will have the Lydians to be a mixt colony of Phrygians, Mysians, and Carians: Others finding some conformity in religion, and religious ceremonies between the Egyptians and Tuscans, who were a Lydian colony, conclude them without any further evidence, to be originally Egyptians. There are many strong proofs, however, of the antiquity of that

* Josephus, vol. 1. page 368, 369,

that kingdom, to be found among the ancient historical writers.

As to the religion of the Lydians, it seems to have been much the same with that of the Phrygians (before treated of) they worshipped Diana, Jupiter, and Cybele, at Magnesia, under the name of Sypilene; for in the alliance concluded between those of Smyrna and Magnesia, on the Mæander, in favour of king Seleucus Callinicius, both parties swore, as appears from the Arundelian marbles, by the goddess Sypilene. She borrowed this name from Mount Sypilus, or perhaps from a town of the same name, which, as Strabo* informs us, was ruined by an earthquake, in the reign of Tantalus. In the same city of Magnesia, stood a temple of Diana Leucophryna, no ways inferior to the so much celebrated temple of Diana Ephesinna.

The customs of the Lydians were as Herodotus † informs us, much the same as those of the Greeks, except that they used
to

* Strabo, lib. i. chap. 38.

† Herodotus, lib. i. chap. 93, 94.

to prostitute their daughters : for the young women among them had no other fortunes, but what they earned by prostitution; after they had, by this means, acquired a competent dowry, they were allowed to marry whoever they pleased. They punished idleness as a crime, and inured their children from their very infancy to hardships. Their arms were not bows and arrows, as some have pretended to argue from Jeremiah ; † but long spears.

† Jeremiah, chap. xlv. v. 9.

No. XXIV.

The Religion of the Lacedæmonians.

LYCURGUS, in the time of the Lacedæmonians, made several salutary laws, among which was one respecting religion, which is all that can be traced from history concerning their religious tenets.

Year of the
flood 1643,
before Christ
705.

We are told that in the Spartan law, regarding religion, the statues of all the gods and goddesses, worshipped by this people, were represented armed, even to Venus herself; the reason of which was, that the people might conceive a military life the most noble and honourable, and not attribute, as other nations did, sloth and luxury to the gods. As to sacrifices, they consisted of things

Year of the
flood 1643,
before Christ
705.

things of very small value ; for which Lycurgus himself gave this reason, that want might never hinder them from worshipping the gods. They were forbidden to make long or rash prayers to the heavenly powers, and were enjoined to ask no more, than that they might live honestly, and discharge their duty. Graves were permitted to be made within the bounds of the city, contrary to the custom of most of the Greek nations ; nay, they buried close by their temples, that all degrees of people might be made familiar with death, and not conceive it such a dreadful thing, as it was generally esteemed elsewhere : on the same account the touching of dead bodies, or assisting at funerals, made none unclean, but were held to be as innocent and honourable duties as any other. As to the mode of burying, it was also rendered simple and unexpensive by law : there was nothing thrown into the grave with the dead body : magnificent sepulchres were forbidden ; neither was there so much as an inscription, however plain or modest, permitted. Fears, sighs, outcries, were not permitted in public, because they were thought dishonourable in Spartans,

Spartans, whom their lawgiver would have to bear all things with equanimity; Mournings were stinted to eleven days; on the twelfth, the mourners sacrificed to Ceres, and threw aside their sables. In favour of such as were slain in the wars, however, and of women who devoted themselves to a religious life, there was an exception allowed as to the rules before mentioned; for such had a short and decent inscription on their tombs. When a number of Spartans fell in battle, at a distance from their country, many of them were buried together under one common tomb; but if they fell on the frontiers of their own state, then their bodies were carefully carried back to Sparta, and interred in their family sepulchres. This is all we can trace from history of their religious customs and ceremonies.

Year of the
flood 1643,
before Christ
705.

L

No.

No. XXV.

The Religion of the Ionians.

Year of the
flood 1786,
before Christ
562.

THE Ionians in latter times degenerated from the valour of their ancestors, and became a most superstitious effeminate people, infomuch, that they, in the time of Herodotus, were looked upon as unfit for any military service.† The Religion of this, as well as all the other Greek colonies in Asia, was much the same with those of Greece. Their principle deities were Ceres, Apollo, Diana, and Neptune. The Ionians, who came from Athens, celebrated every fifth year,

* Herodotus. lib. i. ch. 143. † Valer. Max. lib. ii. rerum memorabil.

year, the mysteries of Ceres Eleusina. †
 The Milesians worshipped Apollo Didymæus
 as their tutelary God; whence he was like-
 wise called Apollo Milesius. Near the city
 of Miletus, was a famous oracle of Apollo,
 called the oracle of Apollo Didymæus; and
 also the oracle of the Branchidæ; the former
 denomination it had from Apollo, or the
 sun, who was surnamed Didymæus, as we
 are told by an ancient historian, from the
 double light imparted to him by mankind,
 the one directly from his own body, and the
 other by reflection from the moon: the lat-
 ter appellation was given both to the oracle,
 and to Apollo himself, who was called Bran-
 chides, from one Branchus, the reputed son
 of Macareus, but begotten, as was believed,
 by Apollo, this oracle was, as we are assured
 by an author of strict veracity,* very an-
 cient, and the best of all the Grecian oracles,
 except that of Delphi.

Year of the
 flood 1786
 before Christ
 562.

In the time of the Persian war, the tem-
 ple was burnt down to the ground, being

L 2 betrayed

† Hist. of Athens.

* Herodotus, book i. chap. 157. and
 book v. chap. 36.

Year of the
flood 1786.
before Christ
562.

betrayed to the Barbarians by the priests. There are many fabulous stories related of these people, but totally uninteresting, and would prove tiresome to the readers, as well as foreign to my subject. As to any thing more concerning their religious principles, we are left in the dark.

No. XXVI.

The Religion of the Armenians.

AS to their religion, Strabo tells us, that the Armenians, Medes, and Persians, worshipped the same deities, and of the religion of the ancient Persians, I have already given a very copious, distinct, and minute account. However, the chief deity of the Armenians, seems to have been the goddess Tanais, or as some stile her Anaitis. To her, several temples were erected all over Armenia, but more especially in the province of Acilesina, where she was worshipped in a particular manner. Here she had a most rich and magnificent temple, with a statue of solid gold and of inestimable workmanship. In honour of this goddess, and in her temple the Armenians

Year of the
flood 2253,
before Christ
95.

Year of the
flood 2253
before Christ
95.

menians used to prostitute their daughters, it being a custom among the young women to consecrate their virginity to Tanais, that is, to her priests. Baris was another deity, peculiar to the Armenians, and had a stately temple erected to him as Strabo informs us; but after what manner he was worshipped, we find no where mentioned.

Juvenal * charges them with foretelling future events by examining the entrails of pigeons, of dogs, and sometimes of children. Others tell us that they used human sacrifices. There are many other extravagant notions related of them, not worth our notice.

* Juvenal, satire 6.

No.

No. XXVII.

The Religion of the Ancient Cappadocians.

THE religion of the ancient Cappadocians was likewise much the same as the Persians before treated of in a most accurate manner.

Year of the
flood 2189.
before Christ
159.

At Comana there was a stately and rich temple consecrated to Bellona, whose battles the priests and their attendants used to represent on stated days, cutting and wounding each other, as if seized with an enthusiastic fury. No less famous and magnificent were the temples of Apollo Catanus or Cataonius at Dastacum, and of Jupiter, in the province of Morimena, which last had three thousand sacred servants, or religious votaries. The chief priest was next in rank to that of Comana,

Year of the
flood 2189,
before Christ
159.

mana, and had, as Strabo * informs us, a yearly revenue of fifteen talents.

Diana Persica was worshipped in the city of Castaballa, where women devoted to the worship of that goddess, were reported to tread bare-foot on burning coals, without receiving any harm.† The temples of Diana, at Diospolis, and of Anias at Zela, were likewise had in great veneration, both by the Cappadocians and Armenians, who flocked to them from all parts. In the latter were tendered all oaths in matters of consequence; and the chief among the priests, was no way inferior in dignity, power, or wealth, to any in the kingdom, having a royal attendance, and an uncontrouled power over all the inferior officers and servants of the temple.

The Cappadocians, in the time of the Romans, bore so bad a character, were reputed so vicious and lewd, so monstrously addicted to all manner of vice, that, besides the share they had in the old Greek proverb, they had some peculiar to themselves, reflecting

* Strabo, book xii. page 375. † Ibid.

fleeing on their enormous wickedness; which made them be so traduced by other nations, that a wicked and impious man, was emphatically called a Cappadocian. However, this their lewd disposition was, in after ages, so corrected and restrained by the pure morals of Christianity, that no country whatsoever, has produced greater champions of the Christian religion, or given to the church more prelates of unblemished characters.*

Year of the
flood 2219,
before Christ
129.

* Universal Hist. vol. x. page 7.

No.

No. XVIII.

The Religion of the Ancient Thracians.

Year of the
flood 2219,
before Christ
129.

THE ancient Thracians were deemed a brave and warlike nation; but of a cruel and savage temper; being generally speaking, quite strangers to all humanity and good nature. In point of religion, they scarce differed from the Macedonians, their neighbours, adoring Jupiter, Hercules, Diana, Bacchus, and more especially Mars and Hermes, or Mercury, by whose name alone their kings used to swear, pretending to be descended from him.* Herodotus gives us the following account of their customs and manners. When a child is born, his relations

* Herodotus, lib. v. chap. 3, 4. et seq.

Year of the
flood 2219
before Christ
129.

lations sitting round him in a circle, deplore his condition, on account of the evils he must suffer in the course of his life, enumerating the various calamities incident to mankind; but when any one dies, they inter him with great rejoicing, repeating the miseries he has exchanged for a complete happiness. Among the Crestonians who inhabit the mountainous part of Thrace, each man has many wives; who, at his death, contend warmly, being supported by their several friends, who shall be accounted to have been the most dear to the husband. In the end, she who is adjudged to have merited that honour, after having received great commendations, both from the men and women, is killed upon the grave, by the nearest of her relations, and buried in the same tomb with her husband; which is a great mortification to the rest, they being ever after looked upon by all with the utmost contempt.* The Thracians in general, (as the historian tells us) sell their sons, and take no care of their daughters, suffering them to live with whom, and in what manner they please; nevertheless they keep

* Herodotus, lib. v. chap. 3, 4. et seq.

Year of the
flood 2279,
before Christ
129.

keep a strict guard over their wives, and purchase them of their relations at a very great rate. To be marked on the forehead is honourable; and a man without such marks, is accounted ignoble. Idleness is esteemed an appendage of greatness: Husbandry is looked upon as unbecoming; and to subsist by war and rapine, highly glorious. The funerals of eminent persons among them, are celebrated in the following manner: they expose the dead body to public view for three days, during which time they perform their lamentations, and sacrifice to the infernal gods, various sorts of animals. When the sacrifices are over, they either burn the body, or bury it in the ground; and having thrown up a mound of earth on the grave, they apply themselves to feasting, and celebrate all manner of combats and sports round the place.*

* Herodotus. lib. v. chap. 3. 4. et seq.

No. XXIX.

The Religion of the Ancient Parthians.

THE Parthians are said to have been very spare in their diet,* their country not affording any superfluities; but at the same time, to have been great lovers of wine, and much addicted to all manner of lewdness, not respecting even their sisters or mothers, whom they were allowed to marry, and as many wives besides, as they pleased, nothing being deemed more honourable among them, than to have a numerous issue.† They entirely neglected agriculture, navigation, trade, and all other callings, being wholly taken up in learning the arts of war, which alone were of any repute among them.

Year of the
flood 2048,
before Christ
300.

Their

* Justin, lib. xii. chap. 3, 9.

† Idem lib. xvi.

Year of the
flood 2048,
before Christ
300.

Their religion was much the same with that of the Persians (before described). They believed that those who fell in battle, enjoyed a perpetual and uninterrupted happiness: a tenet well suited to the genius of a warlike nation: and in most other points of religion, entirely agreed with the Persians. They were most religious observers of their word, thinking it highly dishonourable, not to perform their engagements, or to deceive those who had trusted them on their parole.*

* Josephus Antiq. lib. xviii. ch. ult.

No. XXX.

The Religion of the Etruscans.

THAT the Etruscans were a powerful and polite nation, when Romulus founded or rather restored Rome, appears from the testimony of some good authors.*

Year of Rome
182.

The religion of the Etruscans was a gross and multifarious idolatry. They worshipped in common with the ancient Greeks and Phœnicians, the Cabiri or *Dii magni majorem gentium*. They were also initiated in the *Samothracian* or *Cabirian* mysteries, as appears not only from various authors, but likewise from a curious Etruscan fragment of Antiquity.

* The fathers Catrou and Rouille, in the beginning of their Roman History.

Year of Rome
182.

quity. Besides the Greek and Roman deities, they had several peculiar to themselves, some of which were confined to particular towns and districts. Thus *Nortia* was a goddess held in the highest esteem and veneration at *Vulturni*, and *Volaterræ*; *Viridianus* at *Narnia*; *Valentia* at *Ocriculum*, &c.; *Vertumnus*, *Volturnus*, *Noltumna*, *Pilumnus*, or *Picumnus*, *Ancharia*, *Voltumnus*, *Juturna*, *Portumnus*, *Vitumnus*, *Manturna*, *Vacuna*, &c. were some of the principal Etruscan deities. The ancient Tuscans had likewise their *Di Præstites*, and *Indigetes*, as well as the Latins and other Italian nations.

Under this head may be considered the divine service, sacred mysteries, holy-days, solemn processions, applications in honour of the gods, &c. as also the sacred rites and ceremonies, the *ministri sacrorum pontifices sacerdotes*, *salii*, *augures*, *haruspices*, *vates*, *hymnologæ*, &c. of the Etruscans. To which may be added the *tibicines fidicines*, and other persons who assisted in the divine music on all solemn occasions. As also peculiar sacrifices, the various kinds of *lustrations*, *donaria tem-*
ples.

ples, altars, auspices, auguries, expiations of Year of Rome 182.
 thunder, and ostenta. But a minute and
 particular description of every one of these
 would swell me beyond the limits I have pre-
 scribed myself. However, for the better il-
 lustration of several passages in the Greek and
 Roman writers, relating to the ancient Tus-
 cans, the reader will expect me to touch
 upon, which I shall do in the lightest manner
 possible: First, The divine service and sa-
 cred mysteries of the old Etruscans, agreed
 in several points with those of the Greeks;
 but in others, differed from them. These
 they communicated to the Romans, long
 before that nation had any intercourse with
 the Greeks. Notwithstanding which, se-
 veral Etruscan mysteries were celebrated
 with so much secrecy, that they seem to
 have been but little known, even to the ge-
 nerality of the Romans. The principal of
 these were the *Sacra Samothracia* or *Cabiria*,
 the *Sacra Mithriaca*, and the *Sacra Acheron-*
tica. By an initiation in the *Sacra Ca-*
biria, the ancients believed men to become
 more holy, just, and pure, to be placed un-
 der the more immediate protection of the

M

gods,

Year of Rome
182

gods, especially the *Dii Cabiri*; and to be delivered from all impending dangers. The *Sacra Mithriaca*, instituted in honour of the sun, a most celebrated deity among the Etruscans, required the persons initiated in them not only to be baptized or purified by water, but likewise to be purged or refined by fire. The *Sacra Acherontica* were introduced first into Entruria by Tages, in order to appease the *Dii Inferi*, or infernal deities, to render departed souls more divine, and consequently to translate them from the infernal regions, to the mansions of bliss. In order to which, it was thought requisite to sprinkle the altars and sepulchres of the *Dii Manes* with human blood. But for a more particular and distinct account of all these religious matters, mysteries, and the service, ceremonies, &c. &c. judged necessary, in order to a participation of the benefits supposed to flow from them, the reader must have recourse to the authors cited at the bottom.*

Secondly, As the Romans, before they became acquainted with the Greeks, received every

* Dion. Halicar, Livy, Virgil, Strabo, and others.

every thing relating to religion, and even, as Year of Rome, 1821. may be naturally supposed, their calendar itself from the Etruscans : the festivals, holy-days, and stated times of public worship, of the two nations, must have agreed in most particulars.

Thirdly, The Etruscans borrowed of the Egyptians, or rather the Phœnician shepherds expelled Egypt, their public supplications, pomps, solemn processions, &c. which happened on some of their principal festivals. They supposed the gods more particularly honoured, to be always present at such solemnities. Which notion they likewise received from the Egyptians, or at least the Phœnician shepherds above mentioned : This we learn from the *Mensa Isiaca*, and from what has been advanced by the famous Gori, in a noble piece published some years since, for which, (those who have read him) say he justly merits the thanks and applause of the learned world.*

Fourthly, The rites and ceremonies used by the Haruspices, Augures, Pontifices, &c.

M 2

at

* Anton. Franc. Gor. mus. Etrusc. p. 22. 316. 321.

Year of Rome, 182. at Rome, were derived from the Etruscans.

Nay the Etruscans seem to have been the most celebrated nation in the Pagan world, for skill in augury and divination, as well as of knowledge of the nature of sacrifices, to all which rites and ceremonies necessarily relate. At least they had this character among the Romans, as appears from Cicero and Livy.* It is no wonder, therefore, that the branch of literature, including every thing belonging to the provinces of the Augures, Haruspices, Pontifices, Salii, Sacerdotes, Vates, Hymnologi, &c. should have been emphatically stiled at Rome, *Ars Etrusca et Disciplina Etrusca*.

Fifthly, As for all the aforesaid sacred officers, their habits, instruments, &c. the Tibicines, Fidicines, and other persons who assisted in the divine music, on all solemn occasions, the above-mentioned work of father Gori, † gives us a clear idea of them. Those therefore who have an inclination to be farther instructed in this part of the Etruscan

* Cicero Epist. Familiar, book vi. chap. 6. Livy, book iv.

† Anton. Franc. Gor. mus. etrusc. Florentine, 1737.

can antiquities, will peruse it with great pleasure. Year of Rome,
182.

Sixthly, The same thing may be said of the Etruscan temples, donaria, peculiar sacrifices, various kinds of lustrations, prodigies, altars, expiations, &c. which are there treated of with great accuracy.

That the Phœnicians and neighbouring nations were much addicted to augury and divination, may be collected from Scripture.* It is no wonder therefore, that their descendants, the Etruscans, should have discovered the same disposition. Their writers pretend that Tages, whom some have taken for a god, others for a man; but Tully scarce knows in what light to consider him, was the inventor of every thing relating to augury and divination. To him likewise the Etruscans owed their *Acherontian* books, which were kept with as much care, and held in as great repute by them, as those of the Sibyls were at Rome. These they consulted on all dubious occasions, and looked

M 3

upon

* Deut. ch. xviii. v. 14. — Isaiah, chap. ii. v. 6.

Year of Rome, 182, upon the responses they received from them as infallible. In fine, Tages taught the Etruscans many useful arts and disciplines, as well as the knowledge of future events.

Neither the Etruscans, nor the Romans had any magnificent temples in the earliest ages. The Etruscans had some peculiarities in their religion, which distinguished it from that of every other nation; of which the various deities, peculiar to them, are sufficient proofs. But the ancient Egyptians and Phœnicians mode of worship, were the same with those, for many of the earliest ages, used in Etruria. Nor can any material difference be found between the oldest Oriental and Etruscan divinities. Thus much for the religious rites and ceremonies of the Etruscans. 5

No. XXXI.

The Religion of the Carthaginians.

THE Carthaginians being descended from the Tyrians, their religious worship must of course have agreed in all points at first, with that of the Phœnicians, which has been already, in some measure, described. In process of time, by their intercourse with the Greeks, especially those of Sicily, they came to take a liking to the superstition of that nation, adopted several new deities before to them unknown, and intermixed some of the Greek religious ceremonies with the Tyrian.* But in this they copied after their ancestors the Phœnicians, who gradually imbibed

M 4 many

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. 24, 20, &c.

many superstitious notions prevailing amongst the greater states,† by reason of their vicinity to, and correspondence with, them; and afterwards, upon their subjection to those states, had great alterations made in the whole system of their religion. The Carthaginians likewise, by reason of their extended commerce, must have been in some sort acquainted with the different kinds of superstition established in most nations, with which doubtless they tinged their own. From whence, as well as from other considerations, it may appear, that the religion of Carthage was very gross and multifarious idolatry. The knowledge we have of the Carthaginian manner of worship, as well as the objects of that worship, is derived from the Greek and Roman writers, who have affixed the names of their own gods * to those of the Carthaginians. This has rendered their accounts and observations on this head more imperfect, and less valuable. For though we are well assured that the Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek, Roman, and Carthaginian deities, did in the main agree, yet

we

† Diodorus Siculus, lib. 24, 20, &c. — * Herodotus.

we are as well assured, that each of those nations had not only some particular modes of worship, but likewise some particular deities peculiar to itself. It is impossible therefore, to come to an exact knowledge of Carthaginian gods, from what is delivered of them by the Greek and Roman authors. All that we can do is, to consider their different attributes, and the circumstances attending that adoration their votaries paid them, as given us by several authors aforementioned. By comparing these with what we find related in holy writ of the idols of the Canaanites, and neighbouring nations, as well as the religious customs and manners of those nations, we may, perhaps, give the reader a tolerable account of the religion of the Carthaginians.

Diodorus Siculus tells us, that the Carthaginians in a particular manner adored Chronus * who, according to Quintus Curtius, † and an infinity of other authors, was the Saturn of the Latins. The sacrifices offered up to him were children of the most distinguished

* Diodorus Siculus, lib. 20, et alibi passim :

† Quintus Curtius, lib. iv. chap. 3.

guished families. Upon the signal defeat of the Carthaginian army by Agathocles, three hundred citizens voluntarily sacrificed themselves, in order to render him more propitious to their country. Diodorus further says, that they had a brazen statue or Colossus of him, the hands of which were extended in act to receive, and bent downwards in such a manner, as that the child laid thereon immediately dropt into an hollow, where was a fiery furnace.* The same author adds, that this inhuman practice † seemed to confirm a tradition, handed down to the Greeks, from very early antiquity, to wit, that Chronus devoured his own children. But in this we cannot altogether agree with him. For it can scarce be doubted but the fable itself owes its origin to this most execrable superstition, since the knowledge of it could not be hid from the ancient Greeks, who received both their religion and theology from the Egyptians and Phœnicians.

But though the Carthaginian god, to whom human victims were so agreeable, had the

* Diodorus Siculus, ubi sup.—† Idem, ibid.

the name of Chronus given him by Diodorus, yet we cannot certainly infer from thence, that he was the same deity, because his Punic name is unknown, and therefore it is impossible to determine whether it was of the same import with Chronus or no. However, we shall endeavour to supply this defect, by offering some reasons, which, if they will not absolutely evince the point in view, will yet render it highly probable.

In the first place the Carthaginian custom of giving up their offspring, as an expiatory sacrifice to this god, bears a great analogy to the Greek tradition, concerning Chronus, to wit, that he devoured his own children. This seems to have been a great inducement to Diodorus himself, to conclude that he and Chronus were the same.*

Both the oblations offered to this Carthaginian deity, and the manner of offering them, as likewise the brazen statue mentioned by Diodorus, plainly enough shew, that he was Moloch, † or Milchom, the famous

* Diodorus Siculus, ubi sup. † Levit. chap. xviii. v. 21. chap. xx. v. 2, 3, 4.—2 Kings, chap. xxviii. v. 10.—Psalms cvi. v. 37.

famous idol of the Ammonites, Canaanites, and neighbouring nations. Now, that Moloch, or Milchom, was the Chronus of Diodorus, seems clear from the following consideration : Chronus had for a considerable period, even amongst the old inhabitants of Latium, human victims offered up to him, as Moloch had in Palestine.

The Cretans, in ancient times, sacrificed children to Chronus, as the Canaanites and Phœnicians did to Moloch.

Moloch * was the principal god of the country in which the worship of him prevailed, as appears from his name, which implies sovereignty in it, from his having such particular notice taken of him in Scripture, and from the intimation given in Holy Writ, that he was the great god of the Ammonites. Now Chronus was the chief object of adoration in Italy, Crete, Cyprus, Rhodes, and all other countries where divine honours were paid him.

Lastly,

* Universal History, vol. ii. p. 140.

Lastly, To omit many other arguments that might be produced, both Moloch and Chronus were indisputably the great Baal, Bel,* or Belus, of the Sidonians, Babylonians, and Assyrians, and consequently the same individual deity.

Baal, Belus, Bal or Bel,) for he was known by all these names) was the great god of the Carthaginians. As it is therefore apparent from Scripture† that he was delighted with human sacrifices, and as he was the Chronus of the Greeks, it is evident from hence, that the Carthaginian divinity Diodorus had in view, must have been really Chronus.

The goddess Celestis or Urania was held in the highest veneration by the Carthaginians. The prophet Jeremiah ‡ calls her Baalith Shemain, the Queen of Heaven, and divers other names by some ancient writers, § and another by the name of Juno and Venus: and indeed, in the Phœnician theology, we scarce find any distinction between these
two

* Jeremiah, chap. xvii. v. 5. † Jeremiah, chap. xix. v. 5. et alibi.

‡ Jeremiah, chap. vii. v. 18.—chap. xlv. v. 17. et alibi.

§ Universal History, vol. xvii. p. 271.

two deities. St. Augustin says, that Carthage was the place where Venus had established her * reign : and Virgil informs us, that Juno preferred that spot to all others, even to Samos itself.† As therefore both the Greeks and Romans, had, generally speaking, one single chief divinity to preside over every particular city, country, and district ; this double one must have been owing to the Phœnician or Punic word, which included both of the aforesaid goddesses. Ashteroth, and Astarte were synonymous to Urania and Baaltis, and denoted the moon, as well as Venus and Juno, who was invoked in great calamities, particularly in droughts to obtain rain. The ancient Greeks frequently confound Juno, Venus, and Diana, or the moon ; which is to be attributed to the Egyptians and Phœnicians, from whom they received their system of religion, who seem, in the most ancient times, to have had but one name for them all. In such a perplexed point as this, I shall expatiate no further, since it would be both fruitless and unnecessary, beside carrying me from my subject.

* D'Augustin, in Psalm xcviij.

† Virgil Æneid. 1.

ject. The reader will find as distinct and particular account of the goddesses or goddeses here mentioned, as they can with reason expect, by an ingenious historian,* to whom I refer the curious reader.

The Carthaginians had several other deities which may be seen related at large, † by a well received author, to whom I shall likewise refer the inquisitive reader.

The barbarous custom of offering up human sacrifices did not expire with the city of Carthage, but continued amongst the Africans till the preconsulate of Tiberius. This we learn from Tertullian, who assures us that the pre-consul was so shocked at the unnatural practice of offering up children to Saturn, that he ordered the priests concerned in that horrid impiety to be hanged, and committed the care of the execution to the African militia. This practice had been retained with little or no intermission, from the foundation of the city. For, notwithstanding

* Universal History, vol. ii. p. 332. 346.

† Universal History, vol. xvii. p. 273 to 292.

standing the Carthaginians, to avoid drawing upon themselves the indignation of Darius Hystaspis, might for a few years suspend it, or at least pretend so to do, yet it is certain, that, in his successor Xerxes's time they had resumed it. This appears from history. For Gelon, after he had vanquished them, in the reign of that prince, concluded a treaty of peace with them, of which this was one article, That no more human sacrifices should be offered to Saturn.* Nay, at such a pitch of frenzy, or rather savage barbarity, were they arrived, that mothers, who are naturally the most susceptible of tender impressions, made it a merit to view their own offspring thrown into the devouring flames without so much as a groan.† They, even by kisses and embraces, hushed the cries of their children before they were cast into the flaming statue of Saturn (before-mentioned) imagining the efficacy of the sacrifice would have been intirely lost, if any thing that might have been interpreted as a mark of the least reluctance or regret had been shewn. ‡ They used a drum or a tabret, among other instruments, to drown

* Diodorus Sicul, lib. xi.

† Plutarch.

‡ Idem ibid.

drown the shrieks and outcries of the unhappy victims.* Some authors believe that the Phœnicians, 'from whom the Carthaginians derived this detestable custom, contented themselves with making their children pass through the fire, without burning them; but Selden and others evince this to be a mistake. In times of pestilence, or other public calamities, the Carthaginians endeavoured to appease their offended gods, by vast numbers of such oblations.

From several authors it appears that the Carthaginians were extremely addicted to superstition: they had in general however, some good notions. They addressed themselves to the gods, before they attempted to put in execution any enterprize by them formed; and, after any advantage gained, they were not slack in making proper returns to the powers above for it. They had very magnificent temples at Carthage, and took care to have no deficiency of them, in any part of the Carthaginian dominions.

N

I have

* Plutarch, ub. supra.

I have before described the manner in which the Babylonian women prostituted themselves to strangers at the temple of Mylitta; as likewise the same custom prevailing among the Phœnicians, whose women, for this end, repaired to the great temple of Astarte, at Byblus. I have now to add, that the same things, in all respects, was practised at Carthage; excepting that the money got by this infamous commerce among the Babylonians and Phœnicians, was presented to Mylitta or Astarte, id est Venus; whereas the Carthaginian women applied the wages of prostitution to their own use. This indeed favoured something more of the common harlot than the other; but all these nations were arrived at such an height of infatuation and impiety, on account of their gross idolatry, and variety of pollutions attending it, that it is hard to say which of them was the worst. Canaan's posterity were a most profligate and abandoned race of men, addicted to all, even the most unnatural kinds of lust, as the Scripture tells us. Now it is worthy admiration, that Noah cursed Canaan

an

an only of Ham's sons,* on account of Ham's breach of modesty, in exposing his father's nakedness, which was both unchaste and unnatural. This is a strong intimation, that Canaan only was an accomplice of his father Ham in this wickedness : which was an evident token of a most dissolute and vicious turn of mind. This vile disposition exerted itself in Canaans posterity, and vastly contributed towards drawing down those heavy divine judgments, which in process of time fell upon them. Hence it appears, that in conformity to the patriarch's prediction, Canaan's descendants were subject to the posterity of Shem (id est) the Hebrews ; and that this was, in a great measure, occasioned by the effects of that vile disposition, inherent in them, which so eminently displayed itself in Ham, and, as is probable, in Canaan also. So true is that observation of the royal Psalmist — Righteous art thou, O Lord, and just are thy judgments.†

* Genesis, chap. xi. ver. 22. 25, 26, 27. † Psalm cxix. ver. 137.

No. XXXII.

The Religion of the Numidians.

AS the first Numidians, in common with all the other Indigenæ, of that vast tract between the borders of Egypt and the Atlantic ocean, were called Libyans we may infer from Herodotus, that the principal gods they sacrificed to were the sun and moon. This is a convincing proof of their high antiquity, as clearly evincing, that the migration of the first colony, which peopled this country, preceded the introduction of image worship into the Pagan world. It is likewise an argument, that this colony did not consist of Persians, since the sun only was their principal deity. Some of the Numidians also, might probably worship Triton, Minerva, and

and Neptune, especially those near the confines of Africa Propria, as the same author seems to suggest. That part of this nation, subject to Carthage, it is reasonable to presume paid divine honours to the Phœnician and Greek deities, that were the objects of the Carthaginian worship (of which I have already given so full and ample an account). It appears from Herodotus, that Hephestus, or Vulcan, was an Egyptian deity, worshipped at Memphis; but whether or no, the Numidians held him in any veneration, or indeed had any knowledge of him, I must leave the learned to decide.*

* Herodotus. lib. 4.

N 3 No.

No. XXXIII.

The Religion of the Mauritanians.

MAURITANIA and **Maurusia** are names of this region, derived from the **Mauri**, an ancient people inhabiting it, frequently mentioned by the old historians and geographers. With respect to their religion, Neptune seems to have been one of the principal objects of adoration in this country; which is a sufficient proof that the **Naphthuhim** or **Nephthuhim** of Moses, extended themselves into it; though the first seat of that people might probably, as **Bochart** and **Arius Montanus** imagine, have been in **Marmarica** and **Cyrenaiaca**. This deity and his wife **Neptys** might receive their names from hence, **Neptune**,

tune, Neptys, and Naphthuhim, signifying the king, queen, and people of the sea coasts. It is certain, that the Egyptians called the exterior parts of the earth promontories, and whatever bordered upon the sea, and was washed by it, Neptys. The sun and moon likewise, in common with the other Libyan nations, they paid religious honours to. That they offered human sacrifices to their gods, in imitation perhaps of the Phœnicians and Carthaginians, or some other ancient nation, from whom their ancestors came, is asserted by Seneca. From what Nonus and others have advanced, it seems probable that Bacchus was worshipped by the Mauritanians, especially as the Indians and Arabs adored him in a most particular manner. In short, we are to form a notion of the Mauritanian religion from that of the Egyptians, Phœnicians, Persians, and Carthaginians, already described. What peculiarities in this particular the Mauritanians had, as doubtless they had some, have many ages since been buried in oblivion.

No. XXXIV,

The Religion of the Ethiopians.

JUPITER Ammon, according to the Greek and Latin authors, seems to have been the principal object of religious worship in Ethiopia, though the natives paid likewise divine honours to Isis, Pan, Hercules, Æsculapius, and others, whom they considered as the greatest benefactors to mankind. In short, if these authors may be credited, their religion differed not much from that of the Egyptians; which is not to be wondered at, considering their vicinity to, and intercourse with that people.

However,

However, Diodorus assures us, that some of them were Atheists, who looked upon the sun, by reason of his scorching rays, as their implacable enemy. Could we depend upon a tradition of the modern Abassines, the Ethiopians, or at least a considerable part of them, adhered zealously to the law of Moses, from the time of Solomon, to their conversion to Christianity.

According to this tradition, the queen of Sheba, whom Our Saviour calls the queen of the south, and who ruled over at least, a powerful nation of Ethiopia, had a son by Solomon, named Menilehec, who was educated at that prince's court, and instructed there in the law of God, through the great care of his father. Being afterwards anointed king of Ethiopia, and sent home to take possession of his kingdom, at the desire of several eminent Israelites, and doctors of the law, that attended him, he introduced there his father's religion, which continued among his subjects, and their posterity, till the time of St. Athanasius. What regard is to be paid to this tradition, we shall not take upon

us

us to determine ; since the learned are not a little divided in their sentiments concerning the situation of the kingdom of Sheba, whose queen had an interview with Solomon at his own court. St. Cyprian, Epiphanius, St. Cyril, of Alexandria, Cardinal Baronius, Suarez, Lorinus, Pineda, Bochart, and the Arabs in general, fix her residence in Arabia Felix. The last call her Belkis, and affirm her to have been the daughter of Hod-had, king of the Homerites. On the other hand the Abassine nation, Josephus, Origen, St. Austin, the learned Hugo Grotius, the patriarch Alphonso Mendez, the fathers Balthasar Telles, and Joan Dos-Santos, have placed this celebrated princess in Ethiopia. We have not room here to insert the argument offered on both sides, in defence of their respective opinions ; but shall however observe, that the kingdom of Abassia, seems to answer better the queen of Sheba's country, according to our Saviour's description of it, as being more to the South of it, and more remote from Judea than Arabia. To which may be added, that it appears from Scripture, that some persons of distinction
amongst

amongst the *proper* Ethiopians, were of the same religion with the Jews, or nearly so, in the Apostolical age. For queen Candace's treasurer, baptized by Philip, went with an offering to Jerusalem to worship God there, and was not unacquainted with the writers of the Old Testament, which cannot, we apprehend, be said with so much propriety of the Arabians. This seems a sort of proof that the Mosaic law, was held to be of divine institution in Meroe, and the other parts of Ethiopia dependent on it, even before the birth of Our Saviour, if not as early as the age of Solomon; and consequently adds some weight to the arguments of those writers who have asserted that the Queen of Sheba came out of Ethiopia,

It likewise renders the authority of Josephus preferable to that of Diodorus Siculus, and Stephanus, notwithstanding what M. Bochart has advanced. For if any regard was paid to the law of Moses in Meroe, before Christianity made its appearance in the world, we cannot account for this better, than by allowing, with the Abassines and other

other authors, that this peninsula was the queen of Sheba's country. From whence it will appear probable, that her son introduced some knowledge of the public worship of the Hebrews there, and consequently that its metropolis was called Sheba or Seba, before Cambyfes's reign, as Josephus asserts, and not built by that prince as Diodorus Siculus, and Stephanus will have it. Be that as it will, this appears to have been a prevailing notion amongst some of the Jews and Greeks in Josephus's time, and Herodotus was then cited to support it, however his text, or that of Josephus, may be now corrupted. For the latter historian, cannot fairly be supposed so profligate and abandoned a writer, as to impose a known falsehood and forgery upon the world: notwithstanding Bochart's insinuation. However, it must be owned, that Strabo suggests the people of Meroe, in his time, to have adored Hercules, Pan, and Isis, with another foreign God. But Strabo's authority in this point, cannot overturn what is insinuated by Scripture: nay, he seems to be a little inconsistent with himself, since in the same breath he assures us that
the

the Ethiopians in general acknowledged an immortal God, whom they considered as the first principle of all things, and a mortal God who had no name. Such a notion might easily be formed by remote nations, who knew very little of the Ethiopians, upon supposition that some of them, for a certain period worshipped the true God, and held the memory of Moses in the highest veneration. Far more absurd things than these, the Greek and Latin writers related of the Jews, with whom they had a more immediate communication. And therefore we ought not to be surpris'd at their transmitting to us so imperfect an account of the religious tenets of the Ethiopians; though it should be acknowledged, that, during a certain interval, they agreed in the main with those of the Jews. The author last cited, likewise informs us, that the Ethiopians ranked in the number of their deities, all their most eminent benefactors, and those who were distinguished by their birth. The Sun, according to him, the people under consideration in the most early times so highly adored, that they reputed those to be Atheists, who cursed him

him at his rising; as some such there were inhabiting the torrid zone, because he forced them to shelter themselves from his intense heat in moist and marshy places. For this reason the Greeks and Romans gave the sun the name of the Ethiopian Jupiter. The Ethiopians themselves called him Affabin, or Affabinus, as we learn from Pliny. They consecrated likewise to him the cinnamon tree, an odoriferous shrub, which grew in their country. The priests only were allowed to gather that harvest, which they always ushered in with sacrifices of forty-four oxen, goats, and sheep, beginning the work that followed before sun-rising, and finishing it before his setting. The crop being gathered, they divided it into three parts with a spear, which was never used but on that occasion. They carried away two portions of it, and left on the same place that which fell to the sun; and forthwith, say Pliny, Solinus, and Theophrastus, if the division had been performed with equity, the sun's portion took fire of itself, and was consumed. This ceremony seems to have been common to the Ethiopians above Egypt, and the Sabæans seated in Arabia Felix. Banier believes

believes the Ethiopians to have had gods natural, and gods animated, as well as the Egyptians; that they worshipped the moon under the name of Isis, and universal nature under that of Pan. We doubt not but this may be true: especially since they in all likelihood, at first worshipped the planets, or some of them in common with the Egyptians and Arabians, and likewise paid divine honours to their deceased kings, as did those nations, together with the Mauritanians. Among the princes deified by this last people, were the famous Juba and Versotina, who was probably either one of their queens, or some other woman of the first distinction, rendered illustrious by her glorious actions. The Ethiopians of Meroe, according to Herodotus, in his time, worshipped Jupiter and Bacchus, and had an oracle of Jupiter. Some Ethiopian nations offered sacrifices to the day, which they esteemed as a god, according to Lucian. An ancient tradition prevails among the Abassines that the first Ethiopians adored a monstrous serpent called in their language Arwe-midre; but this favours so much of fable, that the reader will probably think it deserves little regard.

No.

No. XXXV.

The Religion of the Ancient Arabs.

THE Religion of the Arabs (before Mohammed) which they call *the state of ignorance*, was chiefly gross idolatry; the Sabian religion having almost over-run the whole nation, though there were also great numbers of Christians, Jews, and Magians among them. The idolatry of the Arabs, as Sabians, chiefly consisted in worshipping the fixed stars and planets, and the angels, and their images, which they honoured as inferior deities, and whose intercession they begged as their mediators with God. For they acknowledged one supreme God, the creator and Lord of the universe, whom they called Allah Taala, *the most high God*; and their

their other deities, who were subordinate to him, they called simply Al Ilahat, id est, the goddesses.

That the Arabs should easily be led into the worship of the stars, is not at all surprising, since, by observing the changes of the weather to happen at the rising or setting of certain of them for a considerable period, they might easily be induced to ascribe a divine power to those stars, and think themselves indebted to them for their rains, a very great benefit and refreshment to their parched country. Hence, possibly it came to pass, that they had seven celebrated temples, dedicated to the seven planets; one of these in particular, called Beit Ghomdan, was built in Sapaa, the metropolis of Yaman, by Dahac, to the honour of Al-Zobarah, or the planet Venus, and was demolished by the Khalif Oathman. By the murder of this Khalif was fulfilled, the Mohammedans pretend, the prophetic inscription, set, as is reported, over this temple, to wit, *Ghomdan, he who destroyeth thee shall be slain*. The temple of Mecca is also said to have been

O conse-

consecrated to Saturn. That planetary worship was the first species of idolatry, and therefore it is no wonder the ancient Arabs, at present the most ancient nation in the world, should have been infected with it. But besides those stars which were the general objects of worship throughout Arabia, there were some more particularly revered in particular provinces. However, the Arabs, together with the Indians in general, paid a greater regard to the fixed stars than to the planets; which distinguished the Sabians amongst them, from those among the Greeks, who directed their worship to the planets. The Arabs did not only attribute their rains to the influence of the fixed stars, but likewise their winds, storms, tempests, heat, cold, and all kinds of alteration in their atmosphere. They differed, however, amongst themselves in this, that some ascribed the influence producing all the meteorological phenomena to the rising, and others to the setting, of the constellations known amongst them.

Of the angels or intelligences which they worshipped, we find only three mentioned
in

in the Koran, to wit, Allat, Al-üzza, and Manah; these they called goddeffes, and the daughters of God; an appellation they gave not only to angels, but also to their images, which they believed either to be inspired with life by God, or else to become the tabernacles of the angels, and to be animated by them; and they paid them divine honours, because they believed them to intercede for their votaries with God. The Arab Sabians likewise, in common with those of other nations, imagined that the sun, moon, and fixed stars, were inhabited by intelligences of a middle nature, betwixt men and the supreme Being, who actuated their orbs in the same manner as the human body does the soul; and that this was the true cause of all their motions. These beings, they had a notion, became mediators between God and them; for the necessity of a mediator they clearly discovered from the beginning, and therefore, as God's mediators, directed divine worship to them: They first worshipped them by their tabernacles, id est, their orbs themselves; but these, by their rising and setting, being as much under the horizon as above,

they were at a loss how to address themselves in their absence. To remedy this, they had recourse to the invention of images, in which, after their consecration, they thought these inferior deities to be as much present by their influence, as in the stars themselves: and therefore, that all addresses were made as effectually before the one, as before the other. And this may be considered as the origin of image worship. They had many tribes, and every tribe worshipped their own idols, images. &c.

As image worship in some measure proceeded from the deification of dead men, who had been the authors of some signal advantages and benefits to the people they governed, or else greatly famed for their conquests, it is no wonder the Arabs, as well as other nations, should fall into it. Sir Isaac Newton takes hero worship, or the worship of deified dead men, to have been no older than the age of Sefac, the great Egyptian conqueror, who ordered all the nations he conquered, and among the rest, some of the Arabians, at least, to pay divine honours to

his father Ammon, under the title of Jupiter, or Jupiter Ammon. This therefore was the great hero god of the Arabs, as well as of the Egyptians, Garamantes, Ethiopians, Indians, &c. and his son and successor, Sefac, who enjoined this worship, the Bacchus, according to Sir Isaac Newton, of the ancients, little inferior to him.

Besides the idols already mentioned, the Arabs worshipped many others, among them they worshipped large rude stones, and others, nothing more than a lump of *dough*, which they never presumed to eat, till they were compelled to it by famine.

The Persians, by their vicinity to, and frequent intercourse with the Arabians, introduced the Magian religion among some of their tribes, particularly that of Tamim, a long time before Mohammed, who was so far from being unacquainted with it, that from it he borrowed many of his own institutions. The professors of this religion, acknowledged the world, to have been created by God, as their successors do at this day ;

but, being at a loss otherwise to account for the origin of evil, they held two principles, a good one and an evil one: The first they supposed the author of all good, and the other of all evil, believing them to be represented by light and darkness, as their truest symbols, and that, of the composition of these two, all things in the world are made. Though one sect of the Magi asserted, as the Manichæans, and other heretics did, both those principles, to have existed from all eternity, yet they were reputed heterodox; the original doctrine being, that the good principle or God only was eternal, and the other created, as appears from Zoroaster's description of the supreme Being. Amongst other tenets they maintained, that there were good and bad angels; the former guarding and protecting men from evil; and the latter instigating them to all kinds of wickedness. They also believed, that the wicked angels, after they had drawn men out of the paths of virtue, became the instruments of their punishment; and that these angels were continually meditating the ruin and destruction of mankind.

However,

However, some of the Pagan Arabs believed neither a creation past, nor a resurrection to come, attributing the origin of things to nature, and their dissolution to age. Others allowed both; among whom were those, who when they died, had their camel tied by their sepulchre, and so left without meat or drink to perish, and accompany them to the other world, lest they should be obliged at the resurrection to go on foot, which was reckoned scandalous. Some believed a Metempsychosis, and that of the blood near the dead person's brain, was formed a bird, named Hamah, which once in a hundred years visited the sepulchre; though others say, this bird is animated by the soul of him that is unjustly slain; and continually cries, *Oscuni, Oscuni, id est, Give me to drink*, meaning of the murderer's blood, till his death be revenged, and then it flies away. Some of the ancient Arabs seemed to have been addicted to augury, since they held an owl in great abhorrence, as imagining that it always brought ill news, and portended something bad. The camel above-mentioned furnished the Arabs with a proverb

which they applied to all people doomed to a miserable end. Those who expected a future judgment, adored idols, as they pretended, that the heroes or deities they represented, might be hereby induced to intercede for them with God hereafter. It appears probable from some passages of the Koran, and the commentators on those passages, that the ancient Arabs, under the word Genii, comprehended angels, good as well as bad, and that intermediate species of rational invisible beings going among the present orientals by the same name.

From the same passages and commentators, we may likewise infer that most of the Arabians before Mohammed's time, in conformity to the Sabian scheme, paid religious honours to these Genii.

No. XXXVI.

*The Religion of the Ancient State of Spain, to
the Expulsion of the Carthaginians by the
Romans.*

THERE is no doubt to be made, that wherever Spain was inhabited by the descendants of the Celtes (treated of before in this work) thither they brought their old religion, &c. I shall speak more largely of the religion of the ancient Spaniards in my next chapter of the ancient Gauls, the undoubted and immediate descendents of the ancient Celtic stock: for we must necessarily suppose, and so indeed we find, a great affinity between them, as they all sprang from the same origin.

Year of the
flood 2119,
before Christ
229.

Both

Year of the
flood 2119,
before Christ
229.

Both the Celtes and Gauls are supposed to have brought the same religion, laws, government, &c. namely, that which they received from their grandfather Noah, which they strictly adhered to for a long series of years, and was in all these countries, the same as that of the old patriarchs. They worshipped one supreme being, not in temples, 'as the Greeks and Romans, but in groves consecrated to him. They believed a future state of rewards and punishments suitable to their behaviour in this. They offered victims to him, and celebrated some festivals in honour of him; and in most things observed a great simplicity in all their religious rites, during a long series of ages, till by intermingling with other nations, they degenerated into several of their superstitions, especially into their various ways of divination, of which I shall give some account in the next chapter. One bloody and inhuman custom they gave indeed into, very early, in common with most ancient nations; to wit, that of human sacrifices.

But

But as this country was afterwards invaded by such variety of other nations. The Egyptians, Tyrians, Phœnicians, Carthaginians, and a multitude of others who settled amongst them, it is natural to think that every one brought their own religion and customs with them; what they were may be seen in the history of the religion I have given of each of these nations in the course of this work. It is plain, such a mixture of different nations must bring not only a vast variety of religions, laws, and customs, but produce such alterations in each of them, as they mutually borrowed some doctrines and notions, rites and fashions from one another, as suited their caprice or humours. Superstition has no bounds, and persons, either out of wantonness or impatience, will be easily induced to hunt after a variety of deities and superstitious ceremonies. This we find was the case of the Israelites, though restrained from it, under such severe penalties: how much more will it be so, were every one left to his own liberty? However, after the coming of the lordly Romans, whose constant policy it was, to introduce every where their gods, religion,

Year of the
flood 2119
before Christ
229.

Year of the
flood 2119,
Before Christ
229.

religion, laws, &c. either by fair or foul means, we need not doubt, but those that fell under their dominion, were obliged to submit to this change.

The inundation likewise of the northern nations, such as the Suevi, Goths, and Vandals, must likewise have introduced such changes, as may be better imagined than described, who, though they had embraced christianity, yet they were all of them infected with the Arian heresy. This did not however slacken their zeal against the heathenish idolatry and superstition, which had been introduced there by the Egyptians, Carthaginians, Romans, and other nations, whose temples, altars, statues, &c. they destroyed wherever they came, obliging all that fell under their power, to embrace their religion: but both Sueves and Goths, at length exchanged their Arianism for the Orthodox faith, the former, under the reign of their king Ariamiris, alias Theodemirus, and the latter under Reccaredus who made open profession of it, upon his accession to the crown. Their example was followed by the nobles,

nobles, bishops, and clergy; and their confession of faith, was presented to the famed council of Toledo, where some further regulations were made for the preservation of orthodoxy, and for introducing a general conformity of worship. This great change, was so much the more remarkable, considering the tenaciousness of those notions for their old religion, as it was brought about without persecution, or any other violent means. Upon the whole, it must be owned, that the Goths made many excellent laws and regulations for the better government in church and state.

Year of the
A.D. 529,
before Christ
529.

I cannot forbear mentioning here a famed liturgy peculiar to them, known by several names such as *Officium Gothicum*, *Toletanum*, and *Mozarabicum*, and supposed by most authors to have been compiled by Iffidore, then bishop of Seville. This liturgy was confirmed by the Toletan council above-mentioned, though the Pope did not suffer them to enjoy it long, before he obliged them to exchange it for the Roman, not without a long and strenuous opposition from the Goths,

Year of the
flood 2119,
before Christ
229.

Goths, especially those of Catalonia, who sent a number of deputies to the council of Mantua, to expostulate against such a forced innovation.

It is probable that though the first inhabitants of Spain were under one monarchical government, upon their first settling in it, as well as those of Gaul, Germany, and other European nations, yet, as they came to increase in number, and enlarge their territories, they split themselves into a multiplicity of petty kingdoms and common wealths. But as I am not writing a history of their government and laws, let what I have said suffice for their religious tenets.

No.

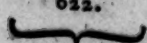
No. XXXVII.

*The Religion of the Ancient State of the Gauls,
to the Time of their Conquest by Julius Cæ-
sar, and from thence to the Interruption of
the Franks.*

I HAVE already given some account of the religion of the ancient Celtes in a former part of this work, and as the Gauls were descended from them, as I have mentioned in the last chapter, it is not to be doubted but it was continued and propagated amongst them, in the same manner and form as they received it from them, till their intercourse with other nations, or perhaps rather, their subjection to them gave birth to those changes

Year of the
flood 1256,
before Christ
622.

Year of the
flood 1256,
before Christ
622.



changes and intermixtures which it afterwards underwent. To come therefore at a tolerable notion of true Gaulish religion, we should seek it among those Gauls who were least conversant with other people, and had least occasion or necessity of receiving or adopting any thing from them; instead of having recourse to that of the Greeks and Romans, from whom whatever they might in process of time borrow, that might cause a kind of resemblance between them, yet originally they differed as much, not only in this, but in almost all other respects, as black from white. Much worse have they succeeded in this point, who have transformed the Gaulish deities into Greek and Roman ones, and spent a deal of time and pains to no purpose, to prove them to have been such.

It is plain the Gauls, (or ancient Celtes) adored a supreme Being, under the name of Esus. This notion was religiously preserved by their Druids; and if they, for worldly ends, or perhaps to please the people, whose impetuous desire, after this novelty, they could

could not resist, suffered the worship and images of these gods to be introduced amongst them, yet they never looked upon them as any other than inferior deities, whatever the laity might be indulged to do in process of time; but the worship of the true God was still carefully kept up, and the oak esteemed a symbol of the deity, as fire was among the Persians, of whom I have spoken largely, To frame therefore a right notion of the religion of this, or any other nation, we must not judge of it by the corruptions introduced into it by a mad populace, and winked at by the priests and philosophers, but as it was believed and professed by those who had the care of it. And in this case we shall perhaps find the most material difference between that of the Gauls, and that of the Greeks and Romans, even in those points, in which they seem most to agree, I mean the worship of the same Gods, with respect to the different characters which they gave, and ideas they entertained of them, the latter seeming calculated to sooth the most inordinate passions, and authorize the worst of crimes, and the former rather quite opposite

Year of the
flood 1256,
before Christ,
622.

P

to

Year of the
flood 1256,
before Christ
622.

to it: The religion of the Gauls is the source and foundation, not only of the ancient Germans, and other more northern nations, but likewise of that of the ancient Britons, who were descended, and had received their religion, laws, and customs, originally from them. I have already hinted that they anciently worshipped the supreme deity, under the name of Esus, and the symbol of the Oak; and it will not be thought strange, that this notion of a supreme Being should have been preserved among the descendants of Japheth, when we find such lively traces of it even among the idolatrous Syrians, Midianites, and even the Canaanites, as in the family of Laban,* of Jethro, † and of the two Abimelechs, kings of Gerar, in the times of Abraham and Isaac, ‡ and some others, particularly the Gibeonites in Joshua's time, § Adonibezek, in the time of the Judges, ¶ and Hiram, king of Tyre, in the reigns of David and Solomon, || who all, not only

* Genesis xxxi. ver. 48, et seq. † Exodus, chap. ii. ver. 28, et seq. et chap. xviii. ver. 9. et seq.

‡ Genesis, chap. xx. ver. 3. et seq. and chap. xxvi. ver. 8. et seq.

§ Joshua, chap. ix. ver. 9. et seq. ¶ Judges, chap. i. ver. 7.

|| 1 Kings, chap. v. ver. 7. et seq.

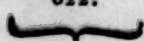
only retained the notion of the deity, notwithstanding their idolatry, but had likewise a peculiar name for it, distinct from those of their other gods. To this we must add, that in the midst of those heathenish superstitions, which crept by degrees into their religion, the Gauls never erected any, either temples or idols, unto this Esus or supreme deity; so that he seems to have been acknowledged by them, much in the same manner that the Athenians did the unknown God mentioned by St. Paul, * which notion was far enough from being peculiar to them. Others had their unknown god as well as they, and owned themselves his offspring, though their notion and worship of him were very imperfect, and in many cases too unworthy of him, as even the Gauls did, when they came to intermingle the Roman theology with their own. However, anciently they seem to have entertained some sublime notions of him; to confirm which, we need but add what Tacitus says of the Senones, who were a branch of the Celtes, and had the same religion; they, says that author, have no

P 2 other

Year of the
flood 1256,
before Christ
622.

* Acts, chap. xvii. ver. 23.

Year of the
flood 1256,
before Christ
622.



other temples but a wood or grove, where they perform all their religious rites. None is admitted to enter it, unless he carries a chain in token of his dependance on, and owning the supreme dominion which God has over him, and if he chance to fall down, none must dare to help him up; but he must either roll himself, or crawl upon his belly, out of the place. He adds, that their whole religion consisted in an acknowledgment, that the deity, which makes its abode there, governs all things; that all things depend on him, and ought to obey him. Strabo says much the same of the Celtiberians, another branch of the Celtes; and adds, that they worshipped the God without name, and danced every full moon, before their houses all the night, in honour of him: and might it not be on this account, as an ingenious author observes, that Lucan rallies the Massilian druids, when he tells them that they were the only ones of all men, to whom it was given to know, or not to know, the gods they adored: And then speaking of their groves, says, that their ignorance of the deities they worshipped under them, was the

the cause of that veneration they paid to those sturdy and shapeless trees. Another remarkable thing in their religion was, their great veneration for the oak. This seems likewise to have been common to them, and the old patriarchs and Jews, among whom that tree was in high esteem, though not in the same superstitious degree. Abraham is recorded to have pitched his tents under some famed oaks, such as those of Mamre or Moreh,* which, though our version, and some others, have transformed into plains, yet, in the original, plainly signify an oak, or oaky grove.† He is said, moreover, to have planted groves of them; and wherever he pitched his tent, he is recorded to have built an altar unto the Lord, and to have given some significant name to the place, such as that of Beersheba, Bethel, and the like.‡ The Gauls in particular improved upon this patriarchal custom, the origin of which seems not owing to any sanctity or extraordinary virtue, which either Abraham, or any of his

Year of the
flood 1256
before Christ
622.

P 3

* Genesis, chap. xii. ver. 6.

† Genesis, chap. xxi. ver. 33. See also the margin of our bibles, and the generality of commentators.

‡ Genesis, chap. xxi. 31. and Genesis, xxviii. ver. 19. et alib.

Year of the
flood 1256,
before Christ
622.

his ancestors, or successors could imagine to be in those trees: whereas, among both Celtes and Gauls, the oak was looked upon and revered as an emblem, or as the peculiar residence of the deity. The fruit of it, especially the misfoldine (or misleto) was thought to have a kind of divine virtue, was used as a panacea for man and beast, and applied to both, as well inwardly as outwardly, in wounds, contusions, and cuticular ailments, and also for inward diseases, and even barrenness and abortion in men, women, and cattle. The leaves or some small boughs of it were worn by the Druids and laity in all their religious ceremonies, which were constantly performed under those trees, or in oaky groves. These, if we may guess from the few fragments we have left of them in history, and from some heaps of stones, still standing in some of our isles, especially that of Anglesey, and which may be supposed to have been cinctures, or fences round the grove to prevent their entrance between the trees, except where it was left open to the comers, and not unlikely, guarded by some inferior druids, to stop all strangers from intruding

truding into their mysteries. They made a large circle, where several smaller ones surrounded, as is supposed, with large stones, which served for the sacrifices, and other most solemn parts of their worship. In the centre, or near it, of these small circles, were placed solid stones of a large size, and convenient height, on which the victims were killed, dissected, and offered up. There is a great affinity between the Celtic religion, and that of the Patriarchs and Jews, as may be found most accurately described by a very ingenious writer,* to whom I refer the curious and inquisitive reader.

Year of the
flood 1256,
before Christ
622

As to the bloody custom of sacrificing human victims, which began so early with the Gauls, and which, if we may believe Procopius, did not end till some centuries after their embracing Christianity; we can only speak of it, as it was transacted out of their groves or places of worship; for as to what was done within them, no stranger being made acquainted with, much less admitted to see it, we must be wholly in the dark

P 4

about

* Ancient Universal History, vol. xviii. page 550, to p. 588.

Year of the
flood, 1256
before Christ
622.

about it, as their druids committed nothing of it to writing. Concerning those unhappy ones that were offered abroad, two* great writers give us the following account.

‘ When a man’s life is in danger, either
‘ through sickness or other accident, they
‘ immediately sacrifice, or at least make a
‘ vow so to do, some human victims; for,
‘ besides that they think them the most per-
‘ fect and pleasing to the Gods, they believe
‘ that one man’s life cannot be redeemed
‘ but by that of another, without which no
‘ satisfaction could be made to them for their
‘ goodness to men. And these are the cere-
‘ monies established among them, upon all
‘ such occasions: They erect an huge hol-
‘ low pile of osier, which they fill with these
‘ unhappy wretches, who are quickly suffo-
‘ cated with the smoke, and reduced to ashes
‘ soon after. They imagine, however, that
‘ criminals of any kind, are much more ac-
‘ ceptable victims; but when they are not
‘ to be had, the innocent must go in their
‘ stead. In their funerals, which are very
‘ mag-

* Cæsar and Plutarch.

' magnificent, they throw into the burning
 ' pile every thing that the deceased delighted
 ' in even to living creatures; and it is not
 ' long since they threw likewise into it all
 ' his favourite servants and slaves. Some of
 ' his near relations (continues Cæsar) like-
 ' wise flung themselves into the flames, in
 ' hopes of living happy with him in the next
 ' world.'

Year of the
 flood 1256,
 before Christ
 622.

In their auguries and other superstitions,
 they imitated in some measure the Jewish
 scape-goat, by devoting some vicarious vic-
 tims to death, and praying, that all the cur-
 ses due to them might fall upon it. The Mas-
 silians, among the rest, are reported to have
 in times of pestilence, made choice of some
 indigent person that offered himself volun-
 tarily, whom they took care to fatten with
 the daintiest fare during a whole year, after
 which, they dressed him with garlands, and
 other rich ornaments, and led him through
 the streets loaded with the bitterest impreca-
 tions to his death.

The

Year of the
flood 1256
before Christ
622.

The common notion among them was, that such a spontaneous death, for the good of the common-wealth, intitled them to a rank among the gods. In other cases they either tied or nailed them to some tree or post, and shot them to death with arrows : others they burnt with a number of beasts on a pile of hay.* The same author adds, that they threw into the fire an incredible quantity of gold, and other rich things, which was death for any one to meddle with afterwards.

To conclude ; the three grand fundamentals of their religion consisted, First, In their worship of the gods. Secondly, In abstaining from all evil. And Lastly, In behaving with intrepidity upon all occasions. In order to enforce this last, on which they valued themselves most, they taught the immortality of the soul, and a life after this of bliss or misery, according as they had lived : and this inspired them with incredible courage and contempt of death.

I shall close this account of the ancient Gauls, with a few words of their excessive love

* Strabo, lib. iv.

love of liberty (though foreign to my subject). They had such a singular contempt of life, when not accompanied with liberty and martial deeds, that either upon the appearance of servitude, or incapacity of action, through old age, wounds, or any chronic diseases, they either put an end to their days, or else prevailed upon their friends to do it, esteeming this last state as much a kind of slavery, as falling into the hands of their enemies.

Year of the
flood 1256
before Christ
622.

No.

No. XXXVIII.

The Religion of the Ancient Germans.

THIS subject hath been already so copiously handled in the last chapter ; as it is so naturally interwoven with it, to say much, would be only a needless repetition. The Gauls and Germans, as nearly allied to each other, originally received not only their religion, but likewise their laws and customs from the same hand, and both retained them, some few particulars excepted, during a long series of ages, with an invincible tenaciousness : it has been observed that the latter continued much longer inflexible, against introducing the Roman superstition, than the

former : so that, with regard to their ancient religion, they exactly agreed in worshipping the supreme Deity, under the name of Esus, or Hesus, falsely said by Roman Authors to have been Mars or Mercury. They worshipped him under the emblem of an oak, consecrated that tree more peculiarly to him, and had a great veneration not only for the tree itself, but for its leaves and fruit, especially the mistleto, and ascribe extraordinary virtues to it, especially in epileptic diseases.* They held like them all other trees, likewise as sacred, though not in the same degree with the oak ; all woods, forests, and deserts, as well as groves, lakes, rivers, fountains, &c. in high veneration. The Druids had the sole care and direction in all religious, and the greatest sway and authority in civil matters ; only it may be here observed, that though both nations held some sort of *women*, whom they looked upon as prophetesses in great esteem : yet the Germans seem to have exceeded the Gauls in this kind of superstition, and to have retained and shewn a much greater

* Pliny's Natural History, lib. xvi. chap. 44. Also Colebatch and Douglas on the Mistleto.

greater fondness and veneration for their pretended oracles.

The Germans, we are told, never undertook any thing of importance, without consulting them, and would even forbear fighting an enemy, let the advantage appear ever so great on their side, if those women disapproved of it. In other things they were, as far as can be gathered from writers.* subject to, and obliged to receive their directions, like the Gauls, from their grand Druid. If there was any difference between the Gauls and Germans in point of religion, it consisted only in this, that the latter being more fierce and untractable, were not only more full and tenacious of their superstitious rites, but likewise more cruel and inhuman in them. They not only offered the same expiatory human victims, and used them in their auguries, and other parts of their religion, but treated them much more cruelly than they, and made them undergo many grievous indignities and torments, before they dispatched them, some instances I have given in the Gaulish religion, that will hardly bear repeating.

* Cæsar and Tacitus.

repeating. Other victims they likewise offered of domestic animals, and of these the horse was reckoned the most acceptable. The flesh of them was, it seems, to be boiled, stewed, or dressed in some other way, in the heart of their groves ; the fat and the flesh were served to the votaries, by way of feasts, and the blood was sprinkled upon the altar, trees, and by-standers, by way of ablution, but though they did the same by that of human victims, it doth not appear that they eat the flesh of them. It appears from divers ancient writers,* that the Germans had no temples, but performed their religious rites in groves erected for that purpose, or in woods, forests, and desert places ; though this latter seems to have been practised after their conquest, and to avoid the penalties of those severe edicts, which the Roman emperors had issued out against the Druids, and their inhuman sacrifices ; however that be, temples were not introduced in Germany, till long after the Gauls had shewed them the way ; and it is plain, that after the former had introduced the worship of Jupiter, Mars,

* Cæsar, Tacitus, Diodorus, Siculus, Strabo, Athenæus.

Mars, &c. they still dedicated oaks, groves, woods, and whole forests to them, and performed their superstitious rites in them a considerable time before they could be brought to erect temples to them.

Both the Gauls and Germans had many deities, and some inferior ones. Mars was called by them Odin, or Woden: as the Germans, as well as the Gauls, made it a constant maxim, not to communicate any thing to strangers; and hence may be assigned the reason why some of them have absurdly imagined this Odin to have been the same with Hesus or Esus, the Supreme Deity.

The great veneration they observed to be paid to this same Odin, their calling upon him at the beginning of a fight, and vowing to him all the plunder, and even lives of their enemies. Mars, when the worship of him came to be adopted, was always, as far as can be gathered from ancient monuments, represented in armour, though anciently under the type of a naked sword; whereas Hesus was only worshipped under the type
of

of an oak, or even the bare stump of one. Mars was not only looked upon as the god of war: but as the patron and guardian of those who were slain, whose souls the survivors bequeathed to him, in words to this effect: *Odin receive thee: mayest thou be with Odin!* If you ask what they supposed was to be their employment in that place of bliss, which was called by them Valhalla, and of which Odinus was the chief disposer; some of their ancient poets will tell you, that one of them was to carouse with exquisite beer in human skulls, whilst Odinus alone, is allowed to drink wine. They were, moreover, to be served by elegant virgins, whose business it was to furnish them with a constant supply of whatever could make them happy and merry; and this notion of a Mohammed's paradise, was no small spur to warlike actions, since every man's felicity there, was to rise in proportion to the number of enemies he had conquered or killed. According to this notion, we need not wonder at their consecrating so great a share, and sometimes all the plunder of their enemies, making him heir of all their wealth, keeper

Q

of

of all their treasure, and often vowing their own lives to him, since they expected to be so amply rewarded by him in the next life, and with such a kind of happiness as best suited with their genius.

How much of this kind of idolatry they may have had before their becoming acquainted with the Romans is not easy to say, there is no doubt but they adopted many of the deities of the Gauls, as well as a great number of their ceremonies and superstitions. However, it plainly appears, that their ancient theology differed much from the mythology of the Romans and Greeks. The Germans, even according to the testimony of Roman writers, neither presumed to confine their deities within temples, nor to represent them under any forms, nor admitted into that number, any but such as they saw, and received assistance and benefit from: such as the sun, moon, and Vulcan * or the god of fire. Their veneration for their deified heroes and heroines, and the encomiums they gave them in their poetical performances, extended no farther than to their virtues

* Cæsar's Comment. lib. vi. c. 21.

tues and heroic exploits, their strength and courage, victories and conquests, whereas the Greeks and Romans not only attributed to their deities, all their own imperfections, but even sanctified their most monstrous and unnatural vices.

The Germans, as well as Gauls, were early taught by their Druids, two momentous truths, to wit, an over-ruling providence, and the immortality of the soul. The misfortune was, that these two noble springs of virtue and religion, did not run long uncorrupted; for as on the one hand, a too eager desire in the people of prying into futurity, and a fatal ambition in their druids and diviners, of being thought more intimately acquainted with the ways of providence, introduced an infinite variety of auguries and superstitions, and some of them, as I have elsewhere hinted, were of the most inhuman and diabolical kind; so, on the other, the belief of a future life and immortality, proved but too fatal a spur to rashness, ambition, and cruelty, especially after they came to imbibe that poisonous notion, that

Q

the

the surest way to that happiness was, to die in the field of battle; and that their felicity in the next world, was to rise according to the number of enemies they had destroyed in this. For this not only inspired them with a barbarous courage and cruelty in their wars, but made them less solicitous to inquire whether the motives of it were just or unjust.

The surest road to Paradise was, to excel in martial deeds, and die intrepidly in the field of battle, and since none were excluded from it but base cowards and betrayers of their country, it is natural to think, that the signal and excessive bravery of the Germans flowed from this ancient belief of theirs: and if their females were so brave and faithful, as not only to share with their husbands all the dangers and fatigues of war, but at length, to follow them by a voluntary death into the other world; it can hardly be attributed to any thing else but a strong persuasion of their being admitted to live with them in that place of bliss. This belief, therefore, whether received originally from the

the old Celtes, or afterwards taught them by the since deified Odin, seems, from their general practice, to have been universally received by all the Germans, though they might differ one from another in their notions of that future life.

I shall close this chapter with observing, that the notion of a future happiness, obtained by martial exploits, especially by dying sword in hand, made them bewail the fate of those who lived to an old age, as dishonourable here, and hopeless hereafter; upon which account, they had a barbarous way of sending them into the other world, willing, or not willing: and this custom lasted several ages after their receiving Christianity, especially among the Prussians and Venedi; the former of whom, it seems, dispatched, by a quick death, not only their children, the sick servants, &c. but even their parents, and sometimes themselves.* And among the latter we have instances of this horrid parricide being practised even in the beginning of the fourteenth century. All

Q 3

that

* Christopher Hartknoch *Dissertation on Prussian Antiquities*, 13.

that need be added is, that if those persons, thus supposed to have lived long enough, either desired to be put to death, or, at least, seemed cheerfully to submit to what they could not avoid, their exit was commonly preceded with a fast, and their funeral with a feast: but if they endeavoured to shun it, as it sometimes happened, both ceremonies were performed with the deepest mourning. In the former, they rejoiced at their deliverance, and being admitted into bliss; in the latter, they bewailed their cowardly excluding themselves from it. Much the same thing was done towards those wives who betrayed a backwardness to follow their dead husbands.

No.

No. XXXIX.

*The Religion of the Ancient State of Britain,
to its Desertion by the Romans, and the
Invasion of the Angles and Saxons.*

THE island, which is now called Great-Britain, and comprehends the two kingdoms of England and Scotland, with the principality of Wales, was in more ancient times, by way of distinction, stiled Albion, the name of Britain, being then common to all the islands that lie round it. Hence Agathemerus, speaking of the British islands, They are many in number, says he; but the most considerable among them are Hibernia and Albion.

Year of the
flood 2294,
before Christ
54,
of Rome,
694.

Year of the
flood 2294,
before Christ
54,
of Rome
694.

The Southern parts of Britain were peopled, according to Cæsar, by the Gauls. Tacitus is of the same opinion, if we consider all circumstances (says he), it is probable that Gaul first peopled Britain which lies so near it.

The religion of the ancient Britons was, as Cæsar informs us * much the same with that of their neighbours the Gauls. They worshipped Jupiter under the name of Taramis or Taran, signifying in the ancient British language, as it does still in the Welch, Thunder. Maximus Tyrius writes, that they paid divine worship to the highest oak they could find, as the figure or representation of this God. Their other deities were Tutates, called by the Britons Duw Taith, the God of journeys, and supposed to be the same with Mercury: Hesus, called also Camulus, according to Cambden, the God of War, or the Mars of the Britons; Beleus, or Belinus, that is, as appears from a passage of Julius Capitolinus: As for their goddesses they

* Cæsar's Comment. book iv.

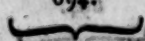
they worshipped Diana under the name of Camma, and paid a very particular veneration to Andate, their goddess of victory, who had a temple at Camalodunum, now Maldon in Essex. The care and direction of all religious matters, was by the Britons, as well as the Gauls, committed to the Druids, whose authority was great, not only in religious, but civil affairs. Their name seems to come from the British word Deru, signifying an oak, not only because they esteemed nothing more sacred than the Mistleto that grows on the oak, but likewise because their usual residence was in groves, among oaks; nor did they perform any of their ceremonies, without some branches or leaves of that tree. They were held both by the Britons and Gauls, in such veneration, that their authority was almost absolute. To them belonged the cares of public and private sacrifices, the interpretation of religion, the bestowing rewards, or inflicting punishments, the deciding controversies, let the difference be of what nature soever: and whoever refused to obey their decree, whether Lord or

Vassal,

Year of the
flood 2294,
before Christ
54.
of Rome,
694.

Year of the
flood 2294,
before Christ

54
of Rome
694.



Vassal, was excluded from the sacrifices, which was accounted the greatest punishment that could be inflicted ; for such as were thus, we may say excommunicated, were reckoned in the number of the wicked, and as such avoided by all, not allowed to commence a suit, to discharge any public office, or to have the least regard paid them. One of the chief tenets they taught, was the immortality of the soul, and its transmigration from one body to another ; which doctrine they looked upon as proper to inspire them with courage and contempt of death. They instructed their youth in several other traditions concerning the stars and their motions, the extent of the world, the nature of things, and the power of the immortal gods. There were women as well as men Druids ; for a female Druid of Tungria, now the bishoprick of liege, foretold to Dioclesian, when yet a private soldier, that he should one day be emperor.

The sect and religion of the Druids spread as far as Italy ; for Augustus published an

edict,

edict, forbidding the Romans to celebrate their mysteries. Besides the Druids, there were, among the Britons and Gauls, priests of an inferior rank, called Bards, whose province it was to celebrate the exploits of their heroes in verses, which they sung to the harp. The Bards were still in Britain, after the Romans had entirely abandoned it.

Year of the
flood 2294,
before Christ

54,
of Rome
694.

No.

No. XL.

The Religion of the Ancient Heruli.

Year of the
flood 2635,
before Christ
287.
of Rome
1035.

THE Heruli were originally a Gothic nation, and first dwelt in Scandinavia, and that being driven from thence by the Dani, they wandered eastward.

Procopius speaks of them, as inhabiting in ancient times, the countries lying beyond the Danube. There they continued making frequent irruptions into the empire, till the reign of the emperor Anastasius, when great numbers of them were cut off by the Lombards, and the rest driven from their ancient habitations.

The

The Heruli had some laws peculiar to themselves, and differing from those of all other nations; for among them, when men were grown old and infirm, they were not to live, but intreat their relations to dispatch them; which they did accordingly, by placing them on a pile of wood, where they were put to death by one, who was a stranger to them in blood, and their bodies reduced to ashes, it being the duty of the nearest relation to set fire to the pile. When the husband died, the wife was to strangle herself on her husband's tomb, on pain of being deemed infamous, and looked upon as one who had no value for her husband. They were given to all manner of lewdness and debauchery; and not ashamed of the most unnatural practices. They adored the same gods as the other Gothic nations,* and used, on some extraordinary occasions, to appease them with human sacrifices.† They were a warlike people, and are chiefly commended by the ancients for their swiftness and agility; on the whole their religion was as barbarous as their manners.

Year of the
flood 2635,
before Christ
287.
of Rome
1035.

No.

* Procopius, c. 14.

† Universal Hist, vol. xix. page 466.

No. XLI.

*The Religion of the Ancient Turks, Tartars,
and Moguls.*

THERE is no doubt but the ancestors of the Tartars were immersed in idolatry, and that they worshipped some of the principal Greek and Roman deities. To Hercules likewise, in common with the Greeks, Romans, Phœnicians, and Egyptians, already described, they paid divine honours. As they were nearly related to the Germans, (whose religion I have before mentioned) they seem to have carried about with them, in their covered waggons, those small images representing certain gods held in great veneration by that people. For that they

roamed

roamed where they found the best pasture for their flocks, as many of the most ancient Germans did, appears from several authors. The celebrated deity Zamolxis was probably worshipped by the Scythians, or ancient Tartars, as well as the Thracians, on account of the salutary laws he gave them. For that, he was a famous legislator, and lived long before Pythagoras may be inferred from Herodotus;* that a considerable part of the Scythians, at least, had a body of religion and laws, to regulate their conduct by, is attested by Ephorus. Nor can it well be doubted, that these laws were framed by Zamolxis, when it is considered that he annexed a most powerful sanction to his institution; to wit, eternal felicity in a future state. And that many of the Scythians were greatly influenced by the sanction annexed to their laws, is exceeding probable: since they have been highly extolled for their temperance, justice, wisdom, integrity, and most sublime friendship, both by Ephorus and Strabo. It should seem therefore, that this people had not only an excellent system of
civil

* Herodotus, lib. iv.

civil and religious institutions, but likewise a most powerful motive to an observance of them. The hideous idols that serve at present for objects of adoration to some of the Pagan Tartars, and Chinese, seem to have been deduced from the monstrous hieroglyphic figures, by which the ancient Egyptians represented their false deities. Nor are those of the Indians, Japanese, &c. to be derived from a different source. Some authors have not scrupled to charge the Tartars, as well as Scythians with atheism: but no one will believe that, who maturely weighs or pays the least regard to the testimony of Herodotus.*

* Herodotus—Æschylus, apud Strabon, lib. vii.

No.

No. XLII.

*The Religion of the Indians, from the earliest
Account of Time, to the Invasion of their
Country, by Mahmud Gazni.*

THOUGH it may be allowed that some of the Indians were descended from Magog, the son of Japhet, in conjunction with the Tartars and Chinese, yet it is likewise probable, that many of them sprung from the other sons of Noah. The Indians, like many other nations, boasted of too high an antiquity, as we learn from an old writer; * they pretended, according to that author, to have had a series of 153 kings between Bac-

R chus

* Pliny, lib. vi.

chus and Alexander the Great, who reigned above 5400 years. Such a notion as this must be allowed to be not only repugnant to sacred writ, but to the whole stream of genuine profane antiquity, and particularly to Herodotus, the father of history.

The principal objects of religious worship among the Indians, in the earliest ages, were Jupiter, or Jupiter Ammon, and Bacchus; in which they agreed with the Egyptians, Arabs, and other nations. Hercules and Pluto had likewise divine honours paid them. The Indians also worshipped a deity, representing Jupiter Pluviolis, Pan, the river Ganges, and a sort of gods answering to the Dii Indigetes of the Romans. These were a kind of genii, or inferior deities, that were in high repute all over India; their power was supposed to extend over this lower world, and in particular over man. A belief of the existence of these spirits is of great antiquity, and seems to have had its source from a disguised and corrupted tradition of the rebellion of the fallen angels, since many of the genii were represented as ludicrous, imprudent,

dent, and wicked beings. Some of the latter Platonists have allotted two genii, a good and a bad one, to every person, whose conduct they thought was influenced by them. The good genius had the denomination of Lar, among the Romans, and the evil one, that of Larva, according to Servius. They were supposed to have their residence in the atmosphere that surrounds this terraqueous globe, and even some of them upon the earth itself. Be that as it will, the notion of good and evil genii, is of so great antiquity, that it will be extremely difficult to trace out its original.* Whatever species of idolatry might at first have prevailed among the Indians, it is probable, that after Cambyfes conquered Egypt, the priests being obliged to abandon that country, found their way into India, where they planted and propagated the Egyptian superstition. The hieroglyphic representations of the Egyptian deities, which the aforesaid priests introduced into this vast region, undoubtedly gave birth to those monstrous figures or images of their false gods, that still in India

R 2

are

* Diodorus Siculus, et Strabo.

are the objects or adoration. As a further demonstration of what is here advanced, it may be observed, that the Indians still preserve some traces of the worship of Isis and Osiris, that anciently prevailed among the Egyptians.

The Brahmans, or Brachmans, or philosophers, were not only the priests of the Indians, but likewise the principal counsellors and directors of their kings, as we learn from Diodorus and Strabo. They therefore served their country both in a civil and religious capacity, as did the Magi among the Persians. Diodorus says that the Indians looked upon these Brahmans as the greatest favourites of heaven, and as men who were perfectly acquainted with every thing that passed in the infernal regions, or related to the kingdom of Pluto.

Arrian, Apuleius, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Plutarch, differ in several particulars relating to these Indian sages; though they all seem to agree in celebrating their love of divine wisdom, their knowledge, their abstemious

stemious way of life, and singular temperance; in fine, their contempt of all the good, as well as bad things of this world, so much desired or dreaded by the bulk of mankind.*

I have neither time nor inclination to transcribe every thing that has been related of the Brahmans by the ancients; nor would this, if transcribed, be of any real advantage to the reader; what therefore I shall say further of them, shall be comprised in a few words. They were not so much a distinct nation, or particular class of philosophers, as a tribe or set of men; or rather a numerous family, descended from one common ancestor, different from the progenitors of the people among whom they lived. They were a body of men, that we may consider as similar to the Fabian, Cornelian, Claudian, &c. families in ancient Rome, deducing their origin from Brahma, the first of the three beings whom God created, and by whose means he afterwards formed the world, according to the modern Brahmans, but in reality

R 3

reality

* Strabo, lib. xv. et lib. xvi.

reality the Patriarch Abraham. For that Brahma should be the supreme being, as M. Bayer asserts, is too absurd to be supposed; and that he was Abraham, has been allowed by some of the best Jewish writers, as well as Shahrestani, an Arab author of good repute. Dr. Hyde likewise offers such reasons in defence of this notion, as cannot be easily overturned.* Postellus takes these Brahmans to have been descended from Abraham, by his wife Keturah, and believes that the true religion prevailed long among them: and indeed from the accounts given us of them by the ancients, it seems to appear that they acknowledged one Supreme Being, and a future state of rewards and punishments. Nay, it further appears from those accounts, that some of them worshipped this Supreme Being, with great fervency and devotion, prayed constantly to him, and despised every thing in this world for his sake. Be that as it will, they were celebrated all over the ancient world for their wisdom and austerity of life, and proposed as a pattern for imitation to nations of greater politeness than the Indians.

* Thom. Hyde Hist. Relig. veter. Persar. page 31. 32.

Indians. Pythagoras studied their doctrine and manners, and received his notion of the transmigration of souls from them. If what is here advanced, be admitted, it will be an additional argument in favour of the migration of some of Shem's descendants into India: and likewise prove, that the Abrahamic religion prevailed at least for many ages, in that remote country. Some of the ancients intimate, that they thought it highly criminal to deprive any, even the most inconsiderable animal of life, in which they are followed by the modern Brahmans.

No. XLIII.

The Religion of the Ancient Chinese.

THE Chinese, like other nations, assume to themselves too high an antiquity, as fixing the reign of the first emperor Fo-hi, near three thousand years before the birth of Christ. Their original, as well as that of the Tartars, favours strongly of fable, as does also the history of several of their first emperors. Several great and distinguished authors, with great reason believe the chronology of ancient times among the Chinese to be very uncertain and precarious.

The first planters of China, instructed by tradition, inspired their children, and through them their numerous posterity, at least for several

several ages, with proper and becoming sentiments of the Supreme Being. They taught them to fear and honour the Sovereign Lord of the universe, to observe the fundamental principles of the first descendants of Noah, and to live according to the principles of the law of nature, engraven in their hearts. Of this we find traces in those ancient and valuable books, which the Chinese call, by way of eminence, The Five Volumes, being the canonical or classical books of the highest rank, which they look upon as the source of all their science and morality.

The chief object of their worship then, at first was the Supreme Being, the Lord and Sovereign Principle of all things, whom they adored under the name either Shang-ti, that is Supreme Emperor, or Tyen, which, with the Chinese, signifies the same thing.

Tyen, say the interpreters of the Five Volumes, *is the Spirit that presides in heaven, because heaven is the most excellent work produced by this first cause.*

Sometimes

Sometimes the word is also taken for the material heaven, the sense being to be determined by the subject to which it is applied. The father the Chinese called the Tyen of the family, the Viceroy the Tyen of the province, and the emperor the Tyen of the kingdom. They also honoured, but with a subordinate worship, inferior Spirits, depending on the Supreme Being, which according to them, presided over cities, rivers, mountains, kingdoms, provinces, particular persons, &c. and nearly answered to the demons and genii of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

But though Shàng-ti or Tyen, was at first the primary, if not sole object of their worship, yet in after ages, they seem to have addressed their vows and homage to the visible material heaven, or at least to a celestial virtue, void of understanding, and inseparable from heaven itself. Nor ought we to be surprised at such a transition from the worship of the Creator, to that of the most beautiful part of the material world in China, since the first species of idolatry that prevailed among
the

the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Phœnicians, Arabs, &c. resembled this of the Chinese, as might be clearly evinced from a great variety of authors, which when quoted, would carry me beyond my limits.

That the Chinese had at first a very rational notion of Tyen, or the Deity, appears from one of their canonical books, going under the appellation of Shu-king. He is therein stiled the father of the people, solely independent, Almighty, a Being who knows the most hidden things, even the secrets of the heart. He is also there represented as watching over the government of the universe, so that no event can happen but by his orders ; as holy without partiality, pleased with the virtue of mankind, superlatively just, punishing wickedness in the most signal manner, even in kings, whom he deposeth, setting up others in their room, according to his will and pleasure.

It is likewise there said, that public calamities are the warnings which he gives for the reformation of manners ; and that these
calami-

calamities are followed by acts of mercy and goodness. The first sages of the Chinese nation, did not only acknowledge a future day of punishment, but had also their minds influenced by the persuasion, that Tyen, by prodigies and extraordinary appearances, gives notice of approaching miseries, wherewith the state is threatened. His intention herein, according to them, is to excite men to a reformation of manners, as the surest way to appease the impending wrath of heaven.

The Shu-king continually inculcates a just dread of the Supreme Being, as the most proper curb for the passions, and the most effectual remedy against vice. It likewise represents all pious suggestions and holy thoughts, as inspired by Tyen, the source of goodness, order, and perfection. According to the same book, Tyen had an absolute dominion over the wills of mankind, in order to conduct them to his own wise and just ends, though he rewards and punishes men by means of one another, without any detriment to their liberty. As the ancient Chinese ascribed to Tyen, power, providence, knowledge

ledge, justice goodness, and clemency; and acknowledged, that the most wicked man, by making use of the assistance Tyen offers him, may attain to the most exalted pitch of virtue, they honoured him with worship and sacrifices, and by the practice of every virtue. They likewise affirmed, that all external adoration is vain and insignificant, if it does not proceed from the heart, and is not animated by the inward sentiments.

The emperor was the only person to whom the function of offering sacrifices to Tyen belonged; but as Tyen, according to the early Chinese, views from heaven every thing done on earth, has given us a soul capable of reflection, and loves virtue; it was not thought sufficient for the priesthood to be joined to the royal dignity in the person of the emperor. But it was moreover judged necessary, that he should be either upright or penitent, and that preparatory to the exercise of his pontifical function, he should expiate his faults with fasting and tears. The ancient sages believed, that mankind could not fathom Tyen's councils and designs; but that

that even the minuteſt and moſt ſecret of their actions, lay open to his all ſeeing eye. They were alſo convinced that he examines all our actions, and has erected a tribunal in our own conſciences, whereby we are judged,

The emperor was looked upon as the only proper perſon to obſerve the primitive rights, and render publicly ſolemn homage to Shang-ti, as being his adopted ſon, and the principal heir of his grandeur on earth. To ſacrifice to the firſt Being of the univerſe, required, in the opinion of the ancient Chineſe, no leſs than the moſt exalted perſon in the empire; to the end that the emperor thus humbling himſelf, in the preſence of his court, by the ſacrifices offered, in the name of the empire, to the maſter of the world, the ſovereign authority of the ſupreme Being, might ſtill ſhine more reſplendent, and appear exalted above any equal. Other ancient kings preſiding over countries nearer our part of the world, had the prieſthood annexed to the royal dignity in them, as has been obſerved by ſeveral very eminent authors.

The

The Chinese seem to have remained in the primitive religion, or the religion of Fohi, till the reign of Shau-hau, when nine Chu-hew or feudatory princes endeavoured to force their subjects to offer sacrifices to evil spirits. They disturbed houses, according to some Chinese writers, with these spirits, and greatly terrified the people with their delusions. But Chwen-hyo, nephew of Whangti, who succeeded Shau-hau, extirpated the race of these nine enchanters, appeased the minds of the people, and restored order to the sacrifices.*

But tho' the canonical book above-mentioned, especially the Shu-king, place the souls of virtuous men near Shangti, yet it does not appear that they have spoken clearly of the punishments in the life to come. The Chinese, in the earlier ages, as well as at present, had a very confused and indistinct notion of the creation of the world. Nor had they any clear idea of the soul, and its operations, either in a conjunct or separate state: But that they believed it to exist after its separation

* Universal History, vol. xx. p. 129.

ration from the body, and were convinced of the certainty of apparitions, has been put by Confucius himself, beyond all manner of doubt.*

It is probable, that before the time of Confucius, idolatry had found its way into China; nay, Confucius's revival of the ancient doctrine supposes this. Several ages after his death, the idolatry of Fo, which had before sprung up in India, was introduced into China. After the conquest of Egypt by Cambyfes, the Egyptian priests dispersed themselves over India, Tartary, and even China itself. To their hieroglyphical representations of the Egyptian deities, are owing those monstrous idols, which from that time to this have been adored in India, Tartary, China, and other remote eastern nations.

I shall conclude my account of the religion of the ancient Chinese, with a word or two on the disposition of these people, (without going far out of my road). They seem

* Confucium apud du Halde, page 646, 647.

seem to have been anciently, as well as at present, of a mild, humane, and modest disposition, and greatly addicted to commerce; for that this was the character of the Seres, we learn from Pliny. Nor, indeed can we suppose that the Chinese have much varied in their genius and disposition, since they have always industriously avoided intermixing themselves with foreigners, and have never suffered any considerable colonies from other nations to settle among them. That this has been one of their political maxims ever since their acquaintance with the Europeans commenced, may be inferred from the accounts given us by the Missionaries, and many relations of modern travellers. The same dislike to foreigners discovered itself in the Seres, according to Pliny,* who mentions it as an instance of their great inurbanity: nor indeed can it be considered in a different light by the members of any polite or civilized nation.

* Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 17.

A SUCCINCT ACCOUNT
OF THE DIFFERENT
SECTS IN RELIGION.

SECTION II.

No. I.

ADAMITES.

THEY were called Adamites, from their pretending to be re-established in the state of innocence, and to be such as Adam was, at the moment of his creation, whence they ought to imitate him in his nakedness. They detested marriage, maintaining, that the conjugal

jugal union would never have taken place upon earth, had sin been unknown: and that the privilege of enjoying women in common, was one of the rights which flowed from their establishment in original purity.

This obscure and detestable sect of heretics did not at first last long; but it was revived in the twelfth century by one Tandamis, who propagated his errors at Antwerp, in the reign of the emperor Henry the fifth. He maintained that there ought to be no distinction between priests and laymen, and that fornication and adultery were meritorious actions. He had a great number of followers, and was constantly attended by 3000 of these profligates in arms. His sect did not however continue long after his death, but another appeared under the name of Turlupins,* in Savoy and Dauphiny, where they committed the most brutal actions in open day.

About the beginning of the fifteenth century, one Picard, a native of Flanders, spread

S 2

these

* Vide Turlupins, sect. 3, No. 39.

these errors in Germany and Bohemia, particularly in the army of the famous Zisca, notwithstanding the severe discipline he maintained. Picard pretended that he was sent into the world as a new Adam, to re-establish the law of nature ; and which, according to him, consisted in exposing every part of the body, and having all the women in common. This sect found also some partizans in Poland, Holland, and England, and assembled in the night. Some learned men are of opinion that the origin of the Adamites was much earlier than the establishment of Christianity, being persuaded that Maacha, mother of Aza, king of Judah, was high priestess of Priapus ; and that in the nocturnal sacrifices which the women performed to that obscene idol, they appeared stark naked. But however that be, the motives of the Adamites were very different from those of the votaries of Priapus ; for they borrowed from Paganism only the spirit of debauchery, and not the worship of that heathen God.

No. II.

CADARI.

THEY are a sect of Mahommedans, who attribute the actions of men to man alone, and not to the divine decree determining his will; and deny all absolute decrees and predestination.

No. III.

DOSITHEANS.

THEY are a sect among the Hebrews, being one of the branches of the Samaritans. They abstained from eating any creature that had life, and were so superstitious in keeping the sabbath, that they remained in the same place and posture wherein that day surprised them, without stirring, till the next day. They married but once, and a great number never married. Dositheus, their founder, being dissatisfied among the Jews, retired to the Samaritans, who were reputed Heretics, and invented another sect; and to make it more authentic, he went into a cave, where by too long abstinence he killed himself.

No.

No. IV.

DAVIDISTS.

THEY were a sect of Christian Heretics, in the sixteenth century, so called from David George, their leader, who began by giving out that he was the Messiah, and was sent into the world in order to people the kingdom of heaven, which was quite empty of inhabitants, for want of virtuous and good men; he rejected marriage, and denied the resurrection,

No. V.

QUIETISTS.

THEY are a religious sect, which made a great noise towards the close of the last century. Molinos, a Spanish priest, who died at Rome, in the prison of the inquisition, passes for the author of Quietism; and yet the illuminati in Spain had taught something like it before. The name is taken from a sort of absolute rest and inaction, which the soul is supposed to be in, when arrived at the state of perfection, which in their language is called the Unitive Lief. To arrive at this, a man is first to pass through the purgative way; that is, through a course of obedience, inspired by the fear of hell: hence he is to proceed into the illuminative way, before he arrive

arrive at perfection : to go through cruel combats, and violent pains ; not only the usual drynesses of the soul, and the common privations of grace, but infernal pains : he believes himself damned ; and the persuasion that he is so, continues upon him strongly for several years : St. Francis des Sales, say the Quietists, was so fully convinced thereof, that he would not allow any body to contradict him therein. But the man is at length sufficiently paid for all this, by the embraces of God, and his own deification.

These sentiments of the Quietists, with regard to God, are wonderfully pure and disinterested. They love him for himself, on account of his own perfections, independently of any rewards or punishments : the soul acquiesces in the will of God, even at the time when he precipitates it into hell, inasmuch, that instead of stopping him on this occasion, B. Angelo de Foligny cried out, ' *Haste Lord, to cast me into Hell : do not delay if thou hast abandoned me, but finish my destruction, and plunge me into the Abyss.*'

At

At length the soul, after long travail, enters into rest, into a perfect quietude. Here it is wholly employed in contemplating its God ; it acts no more, thinks no more, desires no more ; but lies perfectly open, and at large, to receive the grace of God, who by means thereof drives it where it will, and as he will.

In this state it no longer needs prayers or hymns, or vows ; prayers, where the spirit labours, and the mouth opens, are the lot of the weak and imperfect ; the soul of the saint is, as it were, laid in the bosom, and between the arms of its God, where, without making any motion, or exerting any action, it waits, and receives the divine graces. It then becomes happy, quitting the existence it before had : it is now changed, it is transformed, and as it were, sunk and swallowed up in the Divine Being, insomuch, as not to know or perceive its being distinguished from God himself. Vide translation from Fenel. Max. des Saints.

No. VI.

*RECHABITES.*

THEY were a kind of religious order among the Jews, instituted by Jonadab, the son of Rechab, comprehending only his own family and posterity. Their founder prescribed them three things : First, not to drink any wine : Secondly, not to build any houses, but to dwell in tents : And Thirdly, not to sow any corn, or plant vines.

These rules the Rechabites observed with great strictness.

No.

No. VII

ABELIANS.

THEY are a sect of Heretics that sprung up during the reign of Arcadius, near Hippo, in Africa. Their distinguishing tenet was to marry, yet to live with their wives without having any carnal commerce with them.

No. VIII.

ADESSENARIANS.

THEY were a sect of Christians, who maintained the real presence in the Eucharist; but in a sense different from what the Roman church calls Transubstantiation, nor were the Adessenarians agreed among themselves with regard to the mode in which the real presence existed; some being persuaded that the body of Christ is *in* the bread; others that it is *about* the bread; some that it is *with* the bread; and others that it is *under* the bread.

No.

No. IX.

AERIANS.

THESE are a sect of Heretics who separated themselves from the Church party, in the reign of Constantine the Great, and during the Pontificate of Julius I. about the year 342. They had their name from one Acrius, a Presbyter, who thinking himself neglected by not being advanced to the dignity of a bishop, went over to the Arian party, but held some opinions peculiar to himself, as, that there was no distinction founded in Scripture, between Presbyter and bishop. He also asserted, that we are not obliged to observe the stated feasts of the Church, admitted those only into his sect, who lived in continence, and condemned marriage as unlawful.

No. X.

CAINIANS.

A Sect of Christian Heretics that sprung up about the year 130, and took their name from Cain, whom they looked upon as their Head and Father, they said that he was formed by a celestial and Almighty power, and that Abel was made but by a weak one. This sect adopted all that was impure in the Heresy of the Gnostics, and other Heretics of those times : they acknowledged a power superior to that of the Creator ; the former they called Wisdom ; the latter, Inferior Virtue : they had a particular veneration for Korah, Abiram, Esau, Lot, the Sodomites, and

and especially Judas, because his treachery occasioned the death of Jesus Christ : they even made use of a Gospel which bore that false Apostle's name.

No. XI.

BANIANS.

A Religious sect, in the empire of the Mogul, who believe a Metempsychosis, and will therefore eat no living creature, nor even kill noxious animals ; but endeavour to release them when in the hands of others.

The Banians are said to be so fearful of having communications with other nations, that they

they break their cups, if one of a different religion has drank out of them, or even touched them. It is said, that if they happen to touch one another, they purify and wash themselves before they eat, or enter their own houses. They carry, hanging to their necks, a stone called tamberane, as big as an egg, and perforated in the middle, through which run three strings: this stone they say, represents their great God, and upon that account, they have great respect shewn them by all the Indians.

T No.

No. XII.

~~OF THE~~
OPHITES.

*A Sect of Christian Heretics, so called, both from the veneration they had for the serpent that tempted Eve, and the worship they paid to a real serpent: they pretended that the serpent was Jesus Christ, and that he taught men the knowledge of good and evil: they distinguished between Jesus and Christ: Jesus, they said, was born of the Virgin, but Christ came down from heaven, to be united with him: Jesus was crucified, but Christ had left him to return to heaven.† They distinguished the God of the Jews, whom they termed Jaldabaoth, from the supreme God: to the former they ascribed the body,

to

* Tertullian, chap. 7.

† Howel's Hist. of the World, vol. i.

to the latter, the soul of men. They had a live serpent, which they kept in a kind of cage; at certain times they opened the cage doors, and called the serpent: the animal came out, and mounting upon the table, twined itself about some loaves of bread: this bread they broke, and distributed it to the company, who all kissed the serpent: and this they call their Eucharist.

No. XIII.

ANGELITES.

A Sect of Christian Heretics, in the reign of the emperor Anastatius, and the Pontificate of Symmachus, about the year 494, so called from Angelium, a place in the city of Alexandria, where they held their first meetings. They were called likewise Severites, from one Severus, who was the head of their sect; as also Theodosians, from one amongst them called Theodosius, whom they made Pope, at Alexandria. They held that the persons of the Trinity are not the same; that none of them exists of himself, and of his own nature, but that there is a common God or Deity existing in them all; and that each is God, by a participation of this Deity.

No. XIV.

PIETISTS.

A Religious sect sprung up among the Protestants of Germany, seeming to be a kind of men between the Quakers of England, and the Quietists of the Romish Church. They despise all sorts of Ecclesiastical polity; all school theology, and all forms and ceremonies, and give themselves up to contemplation, and the mystic theology.

No. XV.

GAURS.

AN ancient sect of the Magicians, in Persia. They have a suburb at Ispahan, which is called Gaurabad, or the Town of the Gaurs, where they are employed only in the meanest and vilest drudgery ; but they chiefly abound in Kerman, the barrenest province in all Persia, where the Mahometans suffer them to live with some freedom, and in the full exercise of their religion. Some years ago many of them fled into India, where their posterity remain to this day. They are a poor harmless sort of people, zealous in their superstition, rigorous in their morals, and exact in their dealings : they profess the worship of

one God alone, and belief of a resurrection, and a future judgment, and utterly detest all idolatry, though the Mahometans believe them to be the most guilty of it. It is true they perform their worship before fire, for which they have an extraordinary veneration, as believing it to be the most perfect emblem of the deity. They have the same veneration for Zoroaster that the Jews have for Moses, esteeming him a prophet sent from God.

No. XVI,

AGYNANI.

THE Agynani were a sect of Heretics, that appeared in the seventh century. They condemned all carnal commerce with women, and pretended that God was not the author of marriage.

No. XVII.

ALBANENSES.

THEY were a sect of Christian Heretics, in the reign of the emperor Constantine the Sixth, and the Pontificate of Leo III, about the year 796 : Their principal errors were as follows : They held with the Gnostics and Manichæans two principles, the one of good, the other of evil ; and they ascribed the Old Testament to the Evil God, and the New Testament to the Good God. They held with Pythagoras a transmigration of souls. They denied the divinity, and even humanity of Jesus Christ ; asserting that he was not truly man, that he did not really eat, nor suffer on the cross, nor die, nor rise again, nor ascend into heaven. They denied a resurrection

urrection of the body, and affirmed, that the general judgment was past. They held that there had never been a good man in the world before Jesus Christ, and therefore that neither Adam nor Moses were from God. They denied that there was any virtue or efficacy in Baptism. They said likewise, that the bad life of prelates hurt the sacraments; and that no bad man could be a bishop; that the church ought to have every thing in common and could not excommunicate any person, or make any constitutions. They believed that hell torments were no other than the evils we feel and suffer in this life. They rejected the sacrament of the altar, and extreme unction; they did not admit original sin; for which reason they never administered baptism to infants. They denied free will. They held the eternity of the world. They disallowed marriage. They said that usury was not prohibited, and that no one was obliged to restitution; they held that a man gives the Holy Spirit of himself, and that it is unlawful for a Christian to take an oath.

No. XVIII.

ORIGENISTS.

A Christian sect in the fourth century, so called from their drawing their opinions from the writings of Origen. The Origenists maintained, that the souls of men had a pre-existent state, that they were holy intelligences, and had sinned in heaven before the body was created; that Christ is only the Son of God by adoption: that he has been successively united with all the angelical natures, and has been a cherub, a seraph, and all the celestial virtues one after another; that in future ages he will be crucified for the salvation of the devils, as he has already been for that of men; and that their punishment, and that of the damned, will continue only for a certain limited time.

No.

No. XIX.

MAGI.

AN ancient religious Sect in Persia, and other Eastern countries, who maintained that there were two principles, the one the cause of all good, the other the cause of all evil; and abominating the adoration of images, worshipped God only by fire, which they looked upon as the brightest and most glorious symbol of Oromasdes, or the good God; as darkness is the truest symbol of Arimanius, or the evil God. This religion was founded by Zoroaster, who maintained that there was one supreme independent Being; and under him two principles or angels, one, the angel of goodness and light,

light, and the other, of evil and darkness : that there is a perpetual struggle between them, which shall last to the end of the world ; that then the angel of darkness, and his disciples, shall go into a world of their own, where they shall be punished in everlasting darkness ; and the angel of light, and his disciples, shall also go into a world of their own, where they shall be rewarded in everlasting light.

The priests of the Magi were the most skilful mathematicians and philosophers of the ages in which they lived, insomuch, that a learned man, and a Magian, became equivalent terms. The vulgar looked on their knowledge as more than natural, and imagined them inspired by some supernatural power ; and hence those who practised wicked and mischievous arts, taking upon themselves the name of Magians, drew on it that ill signification which the word Magician now bears among us.

This sect still subsists in Persia, under the denomination of Gauri (who have been treated

treated of in the foregoing part of this work) where they watch the sacred fire with the greatest care, and never suffer it to be extinguished.

No. XX.

AETIANS.

A Sect of Heretics that appeared during the reign of Constantius, and in the Pontificate of Liberius, about the year 336.* They had their name from one Aetius, a Syrian, who being reduced to poverty by the confiscation

* Eusebius Ecclesiast. Hist. chap. vi.

of his paternal estate, set up the trade of a goldsmith ; but soon after quitting that employment, applied himself to study, and became a very subtle disputant. He first settled at Antioch, but being driven from that city, he hired himself as a menial servant to a certain sophist at Anabazus, a city of Cilicia, of whom he learned grammar and logic : but quarrelling with his master about his opinions, he went to Tarsus, and applied himself to the study of divinity. From thence he returned to Antioch, but being again expelled for the impiety of his opinions, he undertook the practice of physic, which he continued, till Leontius was promoted to the See of Antioch, when that prelate appointed him deacon of his own church ; where he continued for some time, but afterwards repaired to Alexandria, and opposed Athanasius, openly embracing the party of the Arians.

But besides the opinions which the Aetians held in common with the Arians, they maintained (like the sect of Methodists in these
our

our days) that faith without works, was sufficient to salvation; and that no sin, however grievous, would be imputed to the faithful.

Aetius likewise affirmed, that what God had concealed from the Apostles, he had revealed to him.

No. XXI.

MAHOMETANS.

THE fundamental position on which Mahomet erected the superstructure of his religion, was, that there has been from the beginning of the world, but one true orthodox belief, which consists in acknowledging one only true God, and obeying such of his messengers and prophets as he has from time to time sent into the world to reveal his will to mankind. Upon this foundation he set up for a prophet to extirpate idolatry, which was the religion of the Arabs, his countrymen, and to reform the other abuses crept into religion. The whole substance of his doctrine he therefore comprehended in these two principal articles of faith: ‘ There is

U

but

but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet.' In consequence of which last article, all such ordinances and institutions as he thought fit to establish, were to be received as obligatory, and of divine authority.

The Mahometans divide their religion into two general parts: Faith and Practice, of which the first is divided into six distinct branches; belief in God, in his angels, in his scriptures, in his prophets, in the resurrection and final judgment, and in God's absolute decrees. The points relating to practice are prayer, with washings, &c. Alms, fasting, pilgrimage to Mecca, and circumcision. In regard to these practical points, Mahomet, it is said, declared that the practice of religion is founded upon cleanliness, which is one half of Faith, and the key of prayer. Alms-giving is thought to be so pleasing in the sight of God, that the caliph Omar Ebn Abdalaziz used to say, prayer carries us half way to God; fasting brings us to the door of his palace; and alms procure us admission: and Mahomet himself used to say of fasting, that it was the gate of religion;

religion, and the odour of the mouth of him who fasteth is more grateful to God than that of Musk. Besides these, they have some negative precepts, and institutions of the Koran, in which several things are prohibited: as usury, the drinking of wine, all games that depend upon chance, the eating of blood and swines flesh, and whatever dies of itself, is strangled or is killed by a blow, or by another beast. These doctrines and practices Mahomet established by the sword, by preaching, and by the Alkoran.

The Alcoran, or Alkóran, is universally allowed to be written in the purest and most elegant language, and to be the standard of the Arabic tongue. The stile is in general beautiful and fluent, especially where it imitates the prophetic manner, and scripture phrases. It is concise and often obscure, adorned with bold figures, after the Eastern manner, enlivened with florid and sententious expressions, and in many places, especially where the Majesty and Attributes of God are described, sublime and magnificent. The general design of the Alcoran was, to

unite the professors of the three different religions then followed in the populous country of Arabia, who for the most part lived promiscuously, and wandered without guides, the far greater number being Pagans, and the rest Jews and Christians. In order to perform this, Mahomet pretended to be the ambassador of God, who, after the repeated admonitions, promises, and threatenings, had sent him to establish the true religion upon earth, by force of arms, and appointed him chief Pontiff in spiritual, and supreme prince in temporal, affairs. The great doctrine of the Alcoran is the Unity of God; and to restore that fundamental principle of true religion, Mahomet pretended was the chief end of his mission. But there are many occasional passages in it, relating to particular emergencies; for whenever any thing happened to perplex the false prophet, he always had recourse to a new revelation: and hence there are several passages in the Alcoran, contradictory to one another. The Mahometan doctors, however, obviate any objection that might be raised on this subject, by saying, that God commanded several things

things in the Alcoran, which for good reasons were afterwards revoked and abrogated. The original copy of the Alcoran was bound in silk, and adorned with gold and precious stones of Paradise. This book is held in the highest esteem and reverence among the Mahometans. They dare not so much as touch it without being legally purified; they read it with great attention and respect, never holding it below their girdles. They swear by it, consult it on the most weighty occasions, carry it with them to war; write sentences of it in their banners, adorn it with gold and precious stones, and do not suffer it to be in the possession of any of a different persuasion. The interpreters of the Alcoran unanimously agree, that the most eloquent passage of this whole book, is that which is contained in the chapter Houd, where God is introduced, bidding the waters of the deluge cease. The words are these: 'Earth swallow up the waters, Heaven draw up those thou hast poured out: immediately the waters retreated, the command of God was obeyed, the ark rested on the mountains, and these words were heard, Woe to the wicked!'

The same interpreters remark likewise, that the most excellent moral of the whole Alcoran, is comprized in this verse of the chapter Aaraf: 'Pardon easily, do good to all, and contend not with the ignorant.'

They add, that Mahomet demanded of the angel Gabriel, a more ample explication of this verse, which was given him in these words: 'Seek after him who drives you away: give to him who takes from you: pardon him who offends you; for God would have you plant in your souls the seeds of the greatest perfections.' This morality is plainly borrowed from the Evangelical precept, of rendering good for evil.

No.

No. XXII.

CONDORMIENTES.

THEY are religious Sectuaries, who hold their name from lying all together, men and women, young and old. They arose in the thirteenth century, near Cologne, where they are said to have worshipped an image of Lucifer, and to have received answers and oracles from him. Another species of Condormientes, were a branch of Anabaptists, in the sixteenth century : so called because they lay several of both sexes in the same chamber, on pretence of Evangelical charity.

No. XXIII.*VALENTINIANS.*

* A Sect of Christian Heretics, who sprung up in the second century, and were so called
U 4 from

* Herodianus, chap. vi.

from their leader Valentinus. This sect was one of the most famous and most numerous among the ancients. Valentinus, who was the author of it, was an Egyptian, and began there to teach the doctrine of the Gnostics, (whom I shall describe in the following section.) His merit made him aspire to the Episcopacy; but another having been preferred before him, Valentinus enraged at his denial, and resolved to revenge himself of the affront given him, departed from the doctrine of the church, and revived old errors. He began to preach his doctrine in Egypt, and from thence coming to Rome, under the Pontificate of the Pope Hyginus, he there spread his errors, and continued to dogmatize, till the Pontificate of Anicetus, that is, from the year 140, to 160.

Of all the Gnostics none formed a more regular system than Valentinus. His notions were drawn from the principles of the Platonists. The Æons were attributes of the Deity, or Platonic ideas, which he realized, or made persons of them to compose thereof a complete Deity, which he called Pleroma,

or

or Plenitude ; under which was the creator of the world, and the angels, to whom he committed the government of it. The most ancient Heretics had already established those principles, and invented genealogies of the *Æons* ; but Valentinus, refining upon what they had said, placed them in a new order, and thereto added many fictions. Their system was this ; the first principle is Bythos, that is Depth : it remained for many ages unknown, having with it Ennoe, that is, Thought, and Sige, i. e. Silence. From these sprung the Nous or intelligence, which is the only son, equal to it alone, and capable of comprehending it ; whose sister is Aletheia, that is Truth. This is the first quaternity of *Æons*, which is the source and original of all the rest. For Nous and Aletheia, produced the Word and the Life, and from these two proceeded Man and the Church. This is the second quaternity of the right principal *Æons*. The Word, and the Life, to glorify the Father, produced five couple of *Æons* : Man and the Church formed six. These thirty *Æons* bare the name of Attributes, and compose the Pleroma, or

6 plen-

plenitude of the Deity. Sophia, or Wisdom, the last of these Æons, being desirous to arrive at the knowledge of Bythos, gave herself a great deal of uneasiness, which created in her Anger and Fear, of which was born Matter. But the Horos, or Bounder, stopped her, preserved her in the Pleroma, and restored her to perfection. Then she produced the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, which brought the Æons to their last perfection, and made every one of them contribute their utmost to form the Saviour. Her Enthymese, or Thought, dwelling near the Pleroma, perfected by the Christ, produced every thing that is in the world, by its divers passions. The Christ sent into it the Saviour, accompanied with angels, who delivered it from its passions without annihilating it; and from thence was formed corporeal matter, which was of two sorts, the one bad, arising from the passions; the other good, proceeding from conversion, but subject to the passions.

The disciples of Valentinus did not strictly confine themselves to his system: They took a great deal of liberty in ranging the Æons, accord-

according to their different ideas, without condemning one another upon that account. But what is most abominable is, that from these chimerical principles, she drew detestable conclusions, as to morality; for, because spiritual beings could not perish, being good by nature, hence they concluded, that they might freely, and without scruple, commit all manner of actions; and that it was not at all necessary for them to do good; but above all, they believed continence to be useless. We have in Clemens Alexandrinus, an extract of a letter of Valentinus, in which he maintains, that God does not require the martyrdom of his children, and that, whether they deny or confess Christ before tyrants, they shall be saved. If they believed that good works were necessary, it was only for animal men. Some believed that baptism by water was superfluous: others baptised in the name of the unknown father, of the truth the mother of all, of him who descended in Jesus, of the light redemption and community of powers. Many rejected all outward ceremonies. In fine, the errors of the Valentinians, were wholly incompatible with the Christian

Christian doctrine. If they did not destroy the unity of God, they made him a monstrous composition of different beings. They attributed the creation to another principle; they set up good and bad substances by nature. Jesus Christ, according to them, was but a man, in whom the celestial Christ descended. The Holy Ghost was but a simple divine virtue. There is no resurrection of the body. Spiritual men do not merit eternal life; it is due to them by their nature; and do what they will, they can never miss of it; as material men cannot escape annihilation, although they live an unblameable life.

No. XXIV.

GNOSTICS.

THEY were called Christian Heretics, a name which almost all the ancient Heretics affected to take, to express that new knowledge, and extraordinary light to which they made pretensions.* The word Gnostic signifies a learned or enlightened person. St. Epiphanius ascribes the origin of the Gnostics to Simon Magus, and says, that they acknowledged two principles, a good and a bad. They supposed there were eight different heavens, each of which governed by its particular prince: the prince of the seventh heaven, whom they named Sabbaoth, created the heavens and the earth, the fix heavens below

* Herodianus, chap. xvi.

below him, and a great number of angels. In the eighth heaven they placed their Barbelo, or Barbero, whom they sometimes called the father, and sometimes the mother of the universe. All the Gnostics distinguished the creator of the universe from God, who made himself known to men by his son, whom they acknowledged to be the Christ. They denied that the word was made flesh, and asserted that Jesus Christ was not born of the Virgin Mary, that he had a body only in appearance, and that he did not suffer in reality. They neither believed a resurrection, nor a judgment to come; but imagined, that those who had not been instructed in their maxims, would return into the world, and pass into the bodies of hogs, and the other like animals. They had several apocryphal books, as the Gospel of St. Philip, the Revelations of Adam, the Gospel of perfection, &c.

They supposed there were eight different heavens; each of which governed by its particular prince: the prince of the seventh heaven, whom they named Sabaoth, created the earth, the firmament, and the lower heavens below.

No. XXV.

EBIONITES.

* THEY held the same errors with the Nazarenes, (who are described in the next section), united the ceremonies of the Mo-
saic institution, with the precepts of the Gos-
pel, observed both the Jewish Sabbath, and
Christian Sunday, and in celebrating the Eu-
charist, made use of unleavened bread.†
They abstained from the flesh of Animals and
even from milk. In relation to Christ some
of them held that he was born, like other
men, of Joseph and Mary. and acquired san-
tification only by his good works. Others of
them allowed, that he was born of a virgin,
but denied he was the word of God, or had
any

• Euseb. Eccles. Hist. ch. x. † Howel's Hist. of the World, vol. 1.

any existence before his human generation. They said he was indeed the only true prophet, but yet a mere man, who by his virtue had arrived at being called Christ, and the Son of God. They also supposed that Christ, and the Devil, were two principles, which God had opposed to each other. Of the New Testament they only received the Gospel of St. Matthew, which they called the Gospel according to the Hebrews.

No. XXVI.

NAZARENES,

IS a name originally given to all Christians in general, on account that Jesus Christ was of the city of Nazareth; but afterwards restrained to a set of Heretics, whose religion consisted of a strange jumble of Judaism and Christianity; observing at the same time the

Mosaic

Mosaic law, and the several rites of the Christian religion. There were a sect of Nazarites among the Jews, who either of themselves, or by their parents, were dedicated to the observance of Nazariteship. They were of two sorts, namely, such as were bound to this observance for only a short time, as a week, or month; or those who were bound to it all their lives. All that we find peculiar to the latter way of life is, that they were to abstain from wine, and all intoxicating liquors: and never to shave or cut off the hair of their heads. The first sort of Nazarites were moreover to avoid all defilement, and if they chance to contract any pollution before the term was expired, they were obliged to begin afresh. Women, as well as men, might bind themselves to this vow.

No. XXVII.

ALBATI.

A Sort of Christian Heretics, in the year 1399, in the time of Pope Boniface the Ninth. They were so called from the white linen which they wore. They come down from the Alps, into several provinces of Italy, under the conduct of a priest cloathed in white, and holding a crucifix in his hand. The followers of this priest, whose great zeal made him looked upon as a saint, multiplied so fast, that it alarmed the Pope, who sending soldiers, apprehended and put him to death: upon which his followers immediately dispersed. These monks professed sorrow, and weeping for the sins and calamities of the times; they eat together in the highways, and slept promiscuously.

No.

No. XXVIII.

ANABAPTISTS.

THEY are a sect of Protestants, that sprung up in Germany about the year 1521, immediately after the reformation of Luther. They at first preached up an entire freedom from all subjection to the civil power; but their principal tenet, and that from whence they take their name, consists in re-baptizing all converts to their sect, and condemning infant baptism.

The fanaticism of this sect rose to an amazing height, and many places suffered severely, particularly the town of Munster, which they seized, and one John of Leyden, the king of this new Jerusalem, defended himself in it, as long as possible; but the place

was at length taken, and that ringleader of the Anabaptists put to death in the year 1536. The Anabaptists of Friesland and Holland, condemned the seditious behaviour of their brethren at Munster, though they themselves raised several commotions, under the conduct of one Mennon. They were however, some time after, pretty well cured of their principal errors; so that they no longer pretended to inspiration: no longer opposed magistrates; nor preached up a freedom with all subjections, a community of goods, and the like.

They supported their principal tenet, from the following words of Our Saviour, 'He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.' Now as adults alone are capable of believing, they argued that adults only were fit to be baptized. Calvin, and other writers against them, had recourse to the practice of the primitive church, which is clearly on the side of infant baptism. But some drew an argument against them from the Scripture, which tells us that children are capable of the kingdom of heaven, and at the same time assures us, that except a man be baptized, he cannot

cannot enter into the kingdom of God : Since, therefore, say they, children are capable of entering into the kingdom of God, they are also qualified for being baptized.

It will be necessary to add, that the Anabaptists of England are not included in the above description : for excepting their rejecting infant baptism, they differ very little from the other Protestant Dissenters.

No. XXIX.

LUTHERANS.

THEY followed the religious opinions of Luther, a German divine, who, about the year 1517, began to oppose the Church of Rome, by preaching against the licentious use or abuse of indulgencies, which irritated greatly the Court of Rome ; he proceeded from one point of doctrine to another, till

great numbers of the nobility, clergy, and laity, joining with him, the reformation of many whole electorates and kingdoms was effected. They in general agree with almost all the protestant churches, saving in some few particulars,

No. XXX.

ABIGENSES.

THEY were a sect or party of Reformers about Toulouse, or Albigeois, in Languedoc, who sprung up in the twelfth century, and distinguished themselves by their opposition to the discipline and ceremonies of the church of Rome. They were likewise called Waldenses,

Their rise was occasioned by accident. It happened at Lyons, in a great concourse of people;

people, that one of them fell down on a sudden dead, at which all that were present, were extremely terrified; in particular, one Peter Waldius, who immediately sold his goods and divided them among the poor. Great multitudes presently flocked about him, and he, being something of a scholar, read and explained to them the New Testament in their own tongue, and instructed them in the true principles of the Christian religion. The number of his disciples increasing greatly, this sect spread and prevailed every where.

At length the Albigenfes grew so formidable, that the Catholics agreed upon a holy league or crusade against them. They were at first supported by Raimond, count of Toulouse. Pope Innocent III. desirous to put a stop to their progress, sent a legate into their country; but this failing, he stirred up Philip Augustus, king of France, and the other princes, and great men of the kingdom, to make war upon them: upon which the Count of Toulouse, who had sided with them, made his submission to the Pope, and went over to the Catholics: but soon after finding

himself plundered by the Crusaders, he declared war against them, and was joined by the king of Arragon. His army was defeated at the siege of Muret, where he himself was killed, and the defeat followed by the surrender of the city of Toulouse, and the conquest of the greatest part of Languedoc and Provence. His son Raimond succeeded him, who agreed with the king and the pope, to set up the inquisition in his estates, and to extirpate the Albigenes. In an assembly held at Milan, the archbishop of Toulouse drew up articles, agreeable to which, the count made a most ample declaration against them, which he published at Toulouse, in 1253. This last blow completed the ruin of the Albigenes.

The errors with which they were charged are these: First, that they acknowledged two principles, the one good, the other evil; the first Creator of things invisible and spiritual; the second Creator of bodies, and guardian of the Old Testament. Secondly, That they admitted likewise two Christs; the one wicked, who was he that had appeared

on

on earth ; the other good, who was not yet come. Thirdly, That they denied the resurrection of the body, and believed that the souls of men are demons sent into their bodies for the punishment of their sins. — Fourthly, That they condemned all the sacraments of the church, and believed marriage to be unlawful. As to their manner of life, there were said to be two sorts of people among them, the perfect and the believers. The perfect boasted of their living in continence, of eating neither flesh, eggs, nor cheese. The believers lived like other men, and were even loose in their morals, but they should be saved by the faith of the perfect, and that none were damned who received imposition of hands from them. But perhaps, this charge against them, was only calumny : for Æneas Sylvius, giving an account of them, says, that this sect had a great appearance of piety ; that they lived justly before men, and believed all the articles of the creed ; and that they only blasphemed the Church of Rome and the clergy. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ.* It was their opposing the received doctrines of that church, and the corrupt man-

manners of the ecclesiastics that drew upon them the storm which ended in their destruction.

No. XXXI.

BARDESANITES.

A Sect of Heretics in the second century, the followers of Bardesanes, a native of Mesopotamia. They held the Devil to be a self-existent independant Being; and taught that Christ was not born of a woman, but brought his body with him from heaven; maintained that God himself was subject to fate, and that virtue and vice depended on the influence of the stars.

No. XXXII.

ZEALOTS.

THEY were a very ancient sect of the Jews, so named from their pretended zeal for the laws of God, and the honour of religion. The Zealots were a most outrageous and ungovernable people; and on pretence of asserting God's laws, and a strictness and purity of religion, assumed a liberty of questioning notorious offenders, without staying for the ordinary formalities of the law.

No. XXXIII.

SABÆANS.

THEY were a sect of idolators, much antienter than the Jewish law. In the early ages of the world, idolatry was divided between

tween two sects; the worshippers of images called Sabæans, or Sabians, and the worshippers of fire called Magi (before treated of). The Sabæans began with worshipping the heavenly bodies, which they fancied were animated by inferior deities. In the consecration of their images, they used many incantations, to draw down into them from the stars those intelligences for whom they erected them, whose power and influence they held afterwards, dwelt in them. This religion it is said, first began among the Chaldæans, with their knowledge in astronomy; and from this it was that Abraham separated himself when he came out of Chaldæa.

From the Chaldæans it spread all over the East, and from thence to the Grecians, who propagated it to all the nations of the known world. The remainder of this sect still subsists in the East, and pretend to derive their name from Sabius, a son of Seth; and among the books in which the doctrines of this sect are contained, they have one which they call the book of Seth, and which they pretend was written by that patriarch.

No. XXXIV.

SABELLIANS.

THEY were a particular sect of Christians of the third century, that embraced the opinions of Sabellius, a philosopher of Egypt, who openly taught that there is but one person in the Godhead.

The Sabellians maintained that the word and the Holy Spirit are only virtues, and held, that he who is in heaven, is the father of all things, descended into the virgin, became a child, and was born of her as a son; and that having accomplished the mystery of our salvation, he diffused himself on the apostles in tongues of fire, and was then denominated the Holy Ghost. This they explained, by
resembling

resembling God to the sun, the illuminative virtue or quality of which was the Word, and its warming virtue the Holy Spirit. The Word, they taught, was darted like a divine ray, to accomplish the work of redemption; and that being re-ascended to heaven, the influences of the Father were communicated after a like manner to the apostles.

No. XXXV.

PATRIPASSIANS.

A Christian sect, who appeared about the latter end of the second century; so called from their ascribing the passion to the Father, for they asserted the unity of God in such a manner as to destroy all distinction of persons,

sons, and to make the Father and Son precisely the same ; in which they were followed by the Sabellians, (before treated of), and others. The author and head of the Patripassians, was Praxeas, a philosopher of Phrygia, in Asia.

No. XXXVI.

MARCOSIANS.

THEY were a sect of Christian Heretics in the second century, so called from their leader Marcus, who represented the supreme God, as consisting not of a Trinity, but a Quaternity, viz. the Ineffable, Silence, the Father and Truth ; he held two principles, denied the reality of Christ's sufferings, and

6

the

the resurrection of the body, and had the same fancies concerning the Æons as the Valentinians (before described).

The Marcosians, it is said, made pretences to greater perfection than either St. Paul or St. Peter : and being persuaded that nothing could hinder their salvation, freely indulged themselves in the practice of vice.

No. XXXVII.

DAMIANISTS.

THEY are a branch of the ancient Acephali-severite. They agreed with the Catholics in admitting the sixth Council, but disowned any distinctions of persons in the Godhead, and professed one single nature, incapable of any difference; and yet they called God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

A SUC-

A SUCCINCT ACCOUNT
OF THE DIFFERENT
SECTS IN RELIGION.

SECTION III.

No. I.

DONATISTS.

* THEY were a sect of Christian Schismatics, in Africa, who took their name from their leader Donatus. A secret hatred against Cæcilian, elected bishop of Carthage, about the year 311, excited Donatus to form this sect.

Y

He

• Vide Church Hist. page 108.

He accused Cæcilian of having delivered up the sacred books to the Pagans, and pretended that his election was void, and all his adherents Heretics. He taught that baptism administered by Heretics was null and void: that every Church but the African was become prostituted; and that he was to be the restorer of religion. Some accuse the Donatists of Arianism; Constantius and Honorius made laws for their banishment, and Theodosius and Honorius condemned them to grievous mulcts.

No. II.

NICHOLAITANS.

SIMON MAGUS was the first author of Heresies.* He affirmed that he himself was Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that he was worshipped of all people by divers names, that Christ did suffer no hurt from the Jews; for he was

* Howel's folio History of the World, vol. 1. page 879.

was Christ. That any man might lie with any woman, for this was no sin. That the world was made by angels, and that an angel redeemed mankind. He denied the resurrection. He thought that the gifts of the Holy Ghost might be bought with money, and therefore that sin of him is called Simony. Nicholas, the patron of the Nicholaitans, was one of the seven first deacons, he having a fair wife, and being accused of jealousy, permitted any to marry her, at which fact others taking occasion, thought it lawful for any man to have the company of any woman, whom they themselves could like.* Epiphanius writeth, that they taught venery to be so necessary, that those men who used it *not*, every week, on Friday, could not be saved.

* Epiphanius, lib. ii, et ut supra.

No. III.

CERINTHIANS.

CERINTHUS was a Jew by birth ; about the year 69 sprung up the heresy of the Cerinthians. He taught that the world was made by angels ; that Jesus our Saviour had for his parents indeed, Joseph and Mary, and that at his baptism Christ descended on him, who (saith he) is called the Holy Ghost, by whom he did all his miracles : when Jesus was to be crucified of the Jews, then Christ left him, and returned into heaven. That Christ's kingdom, after the resurrection, should be an earthly kingdom, and men then should live in all fleshly lusts and pleasures together for a thousand years. He denied the divine nature of Christ, and said, that

that he had only an humane nature, and that he was not yet risen from the dead, but should rise hereafter. He affirmed that the old law, and all the old commandments and precepts belonging to it were to be kept, together with the new law or gospel, and that therefore circumcision was necessary for every one that would be saved.*

No. IV.

The SECT of MENANDER.

ABOUT the beginning of Domitian, arose the heresy of Menander, a Samaritan, and the scholar of Simon Magus. He taught first, that the world was made by angels, and that these angels could be overcome by no means,

Y 3

* Ireneus Epiphaneus, Eusebius, lib. iii. c. 28. lib. iv. c. 14.

means, but by art magic. He denied Christ to be a true man. He affirmed himself a Saviour of the world, and that he came from heaven to save mankind, and that all who would be saved, must be baptized in his name. Out of his doctrine came that of Saturninus, of Antioch, who not long after, in like manner, taught that the world was made by seven angels, without the knowledge of God the Father. That Christ was but the shadow of a man, for he had neither the true body nor soul of a man, and thus he fulfilled the mystery of our redemption. He said moreover, that marriage and procreation was of the devil.*

* Eusebius ; also Dr. Howel's History of the World, vol. 1. p. 879.

No. V.

The SECT of MARCION.

*IN the reign of Antoninus Pius; Marcion, the Heretic, began to teach, living in the time of Justin Martyr, who wrote against him. He was a native of Pontus, first a Stoic, then a Christian; he followed Basilides, Cerdon, and Valentinus, in their Heresies. Meeting Polycarpus, he said, *Knowest thou us?* Polycarpus answered, *I know thee for the first born of Satan.* Epiphanius writes, that being a bishop's son, when he had deflowered a virgin, he was by his own father excommunicated, and afterwards flying to Rome, because they there admitted him not into the church, he began to preach

Y 4

detestable

* Eusebius, lib. iv. c. 11. 14.

detestable doctrine. He taught that there were three beginnings, *Good, Just, and Evil*; that the New Testament was contrary to the Old. He denied the resurrection. He baptized such as died without baptism, saying, that Paul bade him do so. He taught that marriage was unlawful, and that it was a great sin to marry. That Cain, the Sodomites, and all wicked men were saved, because they met Christ, when he descended into hell, but the patriarchs and prophets are still in hell, for not meeting Christ; for they thought, said he, that Christ came to tempt them.*

No. VI.

The SECT of SECUNDIANS.

‡ THERE were a sect of Heretics, who were named the Secundians, called so from *Secundus*,

* Dr. Howel's Hist. of the World, vol. 1. book iv. page 904.

‡ Dr. Howel's Hist. of the World, vol. 1. p. 925, folio, printed 1689.

Secundus, in the reigns of Marcus and Commodus, Roman emperors. In life they were beastly, all women among them were common: they denied the resurrection of the flesh. They taught the Heretical opinions of the Gnostics, and of Valentinus, adding thereto certain heathenish doctrines out of Homer. They sacrificed with witchcraft to amaze their auditory, they pronounced Hebrew words. Many women coming to church, under colour of receiving the power of prophecy from them, confessed they were abused by them. Marcus ran away with another man's wife. They poured oil and water upon the head of the deceased, hoping so to redeem them. They said that the life and generation of man consisted in seven stars; that Christ suffered not indeed, and denied the resurrection. Alcibiades refraining the use of God's creatures, was reformed by Attalus the martyr. Archonitici, heretics in Palestine, referred all things unto man's powers. They said the Sabbath was the God of the Jews, and the Devil the son of the Sabbath.* They abhorred marriage, forbade

* Eusebius, lib. v. c. 3.

forbade the use of living creatures, offered water instead of wine in the sacrament, and denied that Adam was saved. Severus, the head of the Severians, was of the opinions of Justin Martyr, reviling Paul, rejecting his epistles, and the Acts of the Apostles. He said that a woman was of the Devil, the man from the middle upwards, was of God, and beneath of the Devil.

No. VII.

The SECT of PEPUZIANs.

THEY were Heretics of Galatia, and Capadocia, called Pepuzians, as also Quintiliani, and Priscilliani,* because they said, that Christ, in form of a woman, being the bed-fellow of Quintilla or Priscilla, revealed unto her

*Epiphan. August. de Heres. likewise Dr. Howel, vol. 1. p. 925.

her divine mysteries. Women were priests among them, and their sacrifices were alike to the Montanists, of which sect they seem to have been, seeing also his prophetesses were of the town Pepuza.

Their neighbours the Artotyrite were Heretics, which offered bread and cheese in the sacrament.*

Alogi denied Christ to be the Word, condemned St. John's gospel, and said, that Cerinthus, the Heretic, wrote the Revelations. Theodotus, a Montanist, through sorcery, took his flight towards heaven, but fell down and died miserable.

* Epiphanius, August. de Heres. likewise Dr. Howel, vol. 1. p. 925.

No. VIII.

*Certain Sects of HERETICS who prevailed
about the Year 110. **

THEBULIS was the first Heretic in the church of Jerusalem. It is said, that he fell from the faith, because they would not chuse him bishop; about the same time there were certain Heretics called Ophite (treated of before in this history) who worshipped a serpent, and thought that the serpent which deceived Adam and Eve, was Christ: they kept a living serpent, which with opening of the chest, and charming of the priest, came forth, licked the bread upon the altar, and wrapped itself about it. Their manner was to kiss the bread, and so to eat, believing verily

* Eusebius, lib. iv. c. 22.

verily that the serpent had consecrated it. They defended themselves, saying, that the Nicolaitans and Gnostic's (before mentioned) delivered them this service. About the same time there were certain Jews, which believing in Christ, called themselves Nazaræi, of Nazareth. In confessing Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, they went contrary to the Jews. But they erred in Christian religion, in that they addicted themselves wholly to the whole law. There were other Heretics, which honoured Cain, and took him for their father, whence they were called Caini. They highly esteemed of Esau, Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, with the Sodomites.* They called Judas the traitor, their cousin, honoured him for betraying Christ, affirming that he foresaw how great a benefit it would bring to mankind. They read a certain gospel, written, as they said, by Judas: they reviled the law, and denied the resurrection. There were others colled Sethiani, who derived their pedigree from Seth, the son of Adam, whom they honoured and called Christ, and Jesus: they held, that in the beginning

* Dr. Howel, vol. 1. page 903.

beginning of the world, he was called Seth, but in the latter days, Christ Jesus. Epiphanius saith, that he disputed with some of them in Egypt, and that the last of them were in his time. Cerdon, the Heretic, came from Syria to Rome, when Hyginus was bishop there. He taught that God, preached by the law and prophets, was not the father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He said that Christ was known, the father of Christ unknown. He denied the resurrection, and the Old Testament.

No.

No. IX.

ZINDIKITES.

THEY were a sect of Mahometan Heretics, or rather Atheists, because they neither believe Providence, nor a resurrection from the dead; they hold there is no other God but the Four Elements; that a man is but a mirror of these, and after death resolves into them, and so returns as elements to God that created them.

No. X.

UNITARIANS,

IS the name given to the Antitrinitarians, called also Socinians; their first settlement

was in Poland, where they declared that they admitted of no other creed than that of the apostles, rejecting that of Nice, and the other ascribed to Athanasius, and in a word, all those that were drawn up by general councils, pretending that they were not agreeable to the word of God, meaning God the Father; they deny the second person in the Trinity to be the supreme Being; 'tis true they acknowledged him to be God, but hold him to be inferior to the father, as being created by him, and dependant on him.

No. XI.

TEMPLERS.

THEY were Christian Heretics, who lived in Jerusalem, anno, 1030, after the death of Philip Augustus, they being so called, because they frequented the temple very much; they

they had an image made by exquisite art, covered with a man's skin, and having two shining carbuncles instead of eyes ; they sacrificed to this idol, the bodies of the dead reduced to ashes, and gave them to be drank by others, to render them more strong and constant ; those who were born to a Templar, wedded to a maid, they roasted after death, and anointed the image with droppings, to evidence their greater zeal ; some will have these to be the same with the Knight's Templers, and others deny it.

No. XII.

SOCINIANS.

THEY were a sect of Christians, (if they may be so called) denominated from Socinus, the author of it, who died in 1604. He

Z

held

held that the Arians had given too much to Christ, asserting that he was meer man, had no existence before Mary, denied openly the pre-existence of the world, denied that the Holy Ghost was a distinct person, and maintained that the Father alone was truly and properly God, exclusive of the Son and Holy Ghost, alledging that the name of God, given to Christ, in the Scriptures, signified no more, than that God the Father had given him a sovereign power over all creatures, and that in consequence of this privilege, men and angels ought to adore him. To maintain this delusion, and to avoid the force of that text: John iii. 13. That no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, he feigned that Christ took a journey to heaven after baptism, and came down again: He denied the redemption of Christ, saying, 'That what he did for men, was only to give them a pattern of heroic virtue, and to seal his doctrine by his death.' Original Sin, Grace, and Predestination, passed for chimera with him. The sacraments he esteemed in efficacious ceremonies. He denied the immensity of

God, ascribing to him a particular corner of heaven, and alledging, that he knew only necessary effects. It is also charged upon the Socinians, that they believe the death and resurrection of the soul to be judged with the body, with this difference, that the righteous shall be raised to eternal happiness, and the wicked condemned to fire, which shall be eternal, but consumes the body and soul of the wicked, in a certain time proportioned to their merits. But most of these they do not pretend absolutely necessary to be believed.

In the works of Socinus himself, and other writers, these principles are to be found: That man, before his fall, was naturally mortal, and had no original righteousness: that no man by the light of nature can have any knowledge of God; that there is no original sin in us, as it imports concupiscence, or deformity of nature; that we have a free will to do good, and may here fulfill the law: That God hath no fore-knowledge of contingencies, but alternatively: That the causes of pre-

' destination are not in God, but in us ; that
 ' he predestinates no particular person to sal-
 ' vation : That God could justly pardon our
 ' sins, without satisfaction ; that Christ died
 ' for himself, that is, not for his sins, for he
 ' was without sin, but for that mortality and
 ' infirmities of our nature which he assumed ;
 ' that Christ became not our high priest, nor
 ' immortal, nor impassible, before he as-
 ' cended into heaven : That death eternal is
 ' nothing but a perpetual continuance in
 ' death or annihilation ; that everlasting fire
 ' is so called from its effect, which is the
 ' eternal extinction or annihilation of the
 ' wicked, who shall be found alive at the
 ' last day ; that Christ's incarnation is against
 ' reason, and cannot be proved by scripture ;
 ' that Christ and the Holy Ghost are not
 ' God. That there is no Trinity of persons,
 ' and that the Old Testament is needless for
 ' a Christian.*

* Socinus, Lubbertius, Crellius Volkellius, and Racovian Catechism.

No. XIII.

SADDUCES.

A Certain sect among the Jews, which took its rise from Zadoc, they denied the existence of spirits, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body. And as for their other opinions, they agreed with the Samaritans, except only in this, that they were partakers of all the Jewish sacrifices, which the Samaritans abhorred: They observed the law, to enjoy the temporal blessings it promised, and to escape the punishment denounced against its transgressors. They rejected all manner of traditions, and absolutely denying fatality, asserted, that as it was impossible for God to do any evil, so neither did he take notice of what evil men

com-

committed; and thence concluded, that it was wholly in our will to do good or evil. Though this sect was not very numerous, yet it was considerable, as being composed of persons of eminent degree; and there was an irreconcilable hatred between these and the Pharisees.

No. XIV.

REMONSTRANTS.

OR Arminians, a powerful party of Christians, first called so in Holland, and who took the name of Remonstrants, from a writing called a Remonstrance, that was presented by them to the States of Holland, 1609, wherein they reduced their doctrine to these five articles.

I. That

I. That God, in election and reprobation, had regard on the one side to faith and perseverance, and on the other side to incredulity and impenitence.

II. That Jesus Christ died for all men, without any exception.

III. That Grace was necessary for the application of one's self to good.

IV. That yet it did not act in an irresistible manner.

V. That before affirming that the regenerate cannot totally fall off; this question ought more accurately to be examined.

The name of Arminians was given them, because that Arminius, Professor of Divinity at Leyden, was the first that opposed the then received sentiments in Holland, of an absolute predestination. The Synod of Dort, consisting of Dutch, French, German, English, and Swiss divines, and held in 1618, condemned their opinions.

No. XV.

PURITANS.

THE Puritans were a sect of strict Calvinists, who appeared in England anno 1565, others say 1568. The great Thuanus gives a very favourable account of them, though (in England) Coleman, Burton, Hallingham, and others of the same opinion, give a contrary one, pretending that they differed but little from the church of Rome; but with all due deference to the above writers, though it must be allowed that there might be enthusiasts amongst them, there was a great deal of piety and sincere religion among those people called Puritans, and could not be denied even by some who were quite of a contrary opinion from them.

No.

No. XVI.

POLYGAMISTS.

THEY were Christian Heretics, who averred it was lawful for a man to have as many wives as he pleased. Their patron was Bernardine Ochimus, who lived in the 16th century. This doctrine has been countenanced by a modern writer, in some of his ingenious works.

No. XVII.

PICARDS.

THE name of a Christian sect, who improved the mistakes of the *Adamites* (treated
in

in a former part of this work) to the extravagance of going naked : They sprung up in the beginning of the fifteenth century, and were denominated from on Picard, who set it on foot ; he ordered all his proselites to go naked, called himself *the Son of God*, and pretended he was sent into the world, as a new Adam, by his father, to refresh the notion, and restore the practice of the law of nature, which he said, consisted principally in two things, the community of women, and going stark naked : And one of the principal tenets of this people was, that their party were the only free people in nature, all other men being slaves, especially those who wore any cloaths upon the score of modesty.

No. XVIII.

PHARISEES.

THEY were a sect that rose in Judea, a long time before the birth of our Saviour; and St. Jerom, who speaks of them in his relation of the Nazarenes, says, that the authors of it were Sammai and Hillel. Those of this sect fasted the second and fifth day of the week: they put thorns at the bottom of their robes, that they might prick their legs as they went along; they lay upon boards covered with flint stones, and tied thick cords about their waists; though these mortifications were neither kept by all, nor always: They paid tythes as the law required, and gave the thirtieth and fiftieth part of their fruits adding voluntary sacrifices to those that were

were enjoined, and appearing very exact in performance of their vows. But pride marred all their actions, because they had no other care, no end, than to gain the affections of the people, and the reputation of being saints. And in this manner they grew so potent, that the last kings of the Jews were afraid to suppress them, and were frequently necessitated to make use of them for their own support. They coveted the chief seats in feasts and assemblies, that they might pass for infallible masters, and the sincerest doctors of the law, which they had abominably corrupted by their traditions. As to the doctrine they professed, they attributed the event of all things to destiny, though they endeavoured to make the liberty of the actions of man's will to accord therewith: They were so far Pythagoreans, as to believe the transmigration of the soul, especially those of people of virtue, esteeming the rest to be always in torments. In judicial astrology, they followed all the opinions of the Gentiles, and St. Epiphanius adds, that they had translated the Greek names of this art, which signified the stars, and signs of the zodiac into Hebrew names.

No. XIX.

LIBERTINES.

THEY were a sect of Christian Heretics, whose ringleaders were Quintin, a taylor of Picardy, and one Copin, who, about 1525, divulged their errors in Holland and Brabant. They maintained that whatsoever was done by men, was done by the spirit of God, and from thence concluded there was no sin, but to those that thought it so, because all came from God. They added, that to live without any doubt or scruple, was to return to the state of innocency, and gave way to their followers, to call themselves either Catholics or Lutherans, according as the company they lighted amongst were.

No.

No. XX.

FRATICELLI.

CERTAIN Heretics of Italy, who had their rise in the Marquisate of Ancona, about 1294. They were most of them apostate Monks, under a superior. They drew women after them, on pretence of devotion, and were accused of uncleanness with them, in their nocturnal meetings. They were charged with maintaining a community of wives and goods, and denying magistracy. Abundance of Libertines flocked after them, because they countenanced their licentious way of living.

No. XXI.

DULCINISTS.

THEY were denominated Heretics from one Dulcin, the head of those wandering
fort

sort of people, who lived in the beginning of the fourteenth century. He pretended to preach the reign of the Holy Ghost; and while he justly enough rejected the Pope's authority, he foolishly made himself to be the head of that third reign, saying that the father had reigned from the beginning of the world, to the coming of Christ, and the sons reign began then, and continued till the year 1300; he was followed by a great many people to the Alps, where he and his wife were taken and burnt by the order of Clement IV.

No. XXII.

CATAPHRYGES.

THEY were a sect of Christian Heretics that began to appear in the second century, they had this name given, because the chief promoters of this heresy came out of Phrygia :

gia: they followed Montanus, his errors; laughed at the ancient prophets, to gain the greater credit for their own doctors; corrupted the form of baptism; christened the dead, and made up the communion bread of Eucharist with young children's blood: They pricked these poor innocent babes with needles, and when the children died in the torment, which frequently happened, the Cathryges invoked them as martyrs, and lifted those that escaped in the number of their priests.

No. XXIII.

CARPOCRATIANS.

HERETICS born in Alexandria, in the second century, and were disciples of Simon Magus: They held that the Son of God was but a mere man, and the son of Joseph, and that

that his soul had nothing above the rest, only that it received more virtues and energy from God, whilst it dwelt with him, before its union with the body, than other souls did, and that God was thus liberal to it, to the end, it might be able to overcome the devils that had created the world. They rejected the Old Testament denied the resurrection of the dead, persuaded themselves that there was no such thing as evil in nature, but only in peoples' fancy : They added several other impieties ; and Carpocrates left a son called Epiphanius, that inherited his father's crimes, and held his absurd notions and sentiments.

A a

No.

No. XXIV.

CAMERONIANS.

THEY were a party of Presbyterians in Scotland, so called from Archibald Cameron, a field preacher, who was the first that separated from Communion with the other Presbyterians that were not of his opinion, concerning the ministers that had accepted of an indulgence from King Charles II. which he alledged to be a countenancing of the supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs; and they said, it was only a making use of the liberty, to exercise the pastoral function, from which they had been unduly restrained. The debate and heat increased on both sides, which the other Presbyterians would have them lay aside, till the controversy could be determined

mined by a general assembly: But the Cameronians, through a transport of zeal, separated from them, and some who associated with them, ran into great excess of frenzy, declaring that King Charles the second had forfeited his right to the crown and society of the church, by his breaking the solemn league and covenant, which were the terms on which he received the former; and his vicious life, which, *de jure*, they said, excluded him from the latter: They pretended both to dethrone and excommunicate him, made an insurrection, but were soon suppressed; since the accession of the late King William, of blessed memory, to the crown of England, they most readily complied with, and zealously served the government, and for their former difference in church matters, they were also laid aside, the preachers of their party, having submitted to the general assembly of the church of Scotland in 1690, of which they still continue members.

No. XXVI.

QUINTILIANS.

THEY were a sect of ancient Heretics, thus called from the prophetess Quntilia. In this sect the women were admitted to perform the sacerdotal and episcopal functions. They attributed extraordinary gifts to Eve, for having first eaten of the tree of knowledge; told great things of Mary, the sister of Moses, as having been a prophetess: they added, that Philip, the deacon, had four daughters, who were all prophetesses.

No. XXVII.

ROSYCRUCIANS.

BROTHERS of the Rosy Cross, a name assumed by a sect or cabal of hermetical philosophers,

losophers, who appeared, or at least were first taken notice of in Germany, in the beginning of the sixteenth century. They pretended to be masters of all sciences, and to have many important secrets, particularly that of the philosopher's stone.

No. XXVIII.

SAMARITANS.

AN ancient sect among the Jews, still subsisting in some parts of the Levant, under the same name.

Its origin was in the time of Rehoboam, under whose reign the people of Israel were divided into two distinct kingdoms, that of Judah, and that of Israel; the capital of the

latter being Samaria, the Israelites obtained the name of Samaritans.

They were anciently guilty of idolatry, and the Rabbins pretend that they worshipped the figure of a dove on mount Gerizim, but the present Samaritans, who are but few in number, are far from being idolaters. They celebrate the passover every year, on the fourteenth day of the first month, on Mount Gerizim, and begin that feast, with the sacrifice appointed for that purpose in Exodus. They keep the sabbath with all the rigour with which it is enjoined in the book of Exodus, none among them stirring out of doors, but to the synagogue; they sacrifice no where but on mount Gerizim; they observe the feast of expiation, tabernacles, harvest, &c. and never defer circumcision beyond the 8th day, they never marry their nieces, as the Jews do; have but one wife; and in fine, do nothing but what is commanded in the law.

No. XXIX.

TATIANITES.

A Sect of Christian Heretics, in the second century, so called from their leader Tatian, a disciple of St. Justin, This Heresiarch took from Valentinus, the fable of the Æons, and from Marcion, the doctrine of two principles. But what particularly distinguished his followers, was, their condemning of marriage, and forbidding the eating of flesh, or drinking of wine.

No. XXX.

TURLUPINS.

AN infamous sect which made its appearance in France, in the fourteenth century,

A a 4

and

and in the reign of Charles V. Their principal scene was in Savoy and Dauphiny. They taught, that when a man is arrived at a certain state of perfection, he is freed from all subjection to the divine law. They allow of no prayer to God, but mental. They often went naked, and said, we ought not to be ashamed of any parts which nature had given us. Notwithstanding these impious extravagances, they affected great airs of spirituality and devotion, the better to insinuate themselves into the good opinion of the women. It is not easy to find the true reason of their name; Monsieur Vignier thinks they were called Turlupins, because they usually abode in places exposed to wolves, lupis. They affected to call themselves 'The Fraternity of the Poor.' The Turlupins were prosecuted by order of the government. Their books and cloaths were burnt at Paris, and Joan Dabentonne, and another woman, who were the principal preachers of this sect, were burnt alive.

No. XXXI.

WICKLIFFITES.

A Religious sect, who had their rise in England, and their name from their leader John Wickliff, a professor of divinity in the University of Oxford. To that immortal author it is we owe the first hint of the great reformation, effected 200 years after him. Wickliff maintained that the substance of the sacramental bread and wine still remained such after consecration. He also opposed the doctrine of purgatory, indulgences, the invocation of saints, and the worship of images.

He made an English version of the bible :
and composed two large volumes called Ale-
theia ; that is, Truth, which was the source
whence

whence John Hufs first learned most of his doctrines. The Archbishop of Canterbury, called a council against Wickliff, and he was condemned therein; but the good reformer set the condemnation at nought. After this king Richard banished him out of England; but he was afterwards recalled, and died in his own country, in the year 1384.

Forty years afterwards, his doctrines, and the adherents thereto, were condemned by the council of Constance; in consequence of which, his bones were dug up; and the council condemned him for forty errors.

No. XXXII.

SIMONIANS.

AS this *Seet* of ancient Heretics was founded by Simon Magus, the notorious impostor and magician, I shall endeavour to give an accurate and minute description of *them*.

Simon Magus was a Samaritan, born in the village of Gitton. St. Philip, the deacon, coming to preach at Samaria, converted several persons there, and among the rest, this Simon, who believed and was baptized. When the apostles St. Peter and St. John came to Samaria, and had conferred the Holy Ghost on such as had been baptized by Philip. Simon full of amazement at seeing the wonderful effects of the apostles imposition

sition of hands, offered them money, on condition they would give him the same power, for which he received a very sharp and severe rebuke from St. Peter. The author of the acts of the apostles adds, that Simon had before addicted himself to the practice of magic, and by his impostures and enchantments, had seduced the people of Samaria, who all followed him as a person endowed with a divine and supernatural power.

After St. Peter's reproof, and refusal to sell him the power of imparting the Holy Ghost, Simon fell into many great errors and abominations, applying himself to magic more than ever, and taking a pride in withstanding the apostles. For this purpose he left Samaria, and travelled through several provinces, seeking out such places where the gospel had not yet been preached, that he might prejudice the minds of men against it. At Tyre, in Phœnicia, he bought a public prostitute, named Selene, or Helene, whom he carried about with him wherever he went, pretending she was that Helen who had occasioned the Trojan war.

Having

Having run through several provinces, and gained the admiration of a vast number of persons, he came to Rome, in the time of the Emperor Claudius, about the year of Christ 41. It is said he was honoured as a God by the Romans, and that the senate decreed a statue to be erected to him in the isle of the Tiber, inscribed, To Simon the Holy. The fact, however, is disputed by the best critics, who think that Justin Martyr mistook an image of Semo Sanctus, a Pagan deity, for one erected to Simon Magus.

St. Peter coming to Rome some time after the arrival of Simon Magus, soon reversed all that the impostor had been doing there. However, Simon did not quit that city, but continued to spread his errors, and under the reign of Nero, again acquired a great reputation by his enchantments. He pretended to be the Christ, and that he could ascend into heaven. And we are told, he raised himself up into the air, in a fiery chariot, by the assistance of magic art. But St. Peter and St. Paul, at the same time betaking themselves to prayer, his charms failed him, and falling to
5 the

the ground, he broke his legs. Being carried to Brundisium, he there threw himself from the top of a house where he lodged, and died on the spot.

The heresies of Simon Magus were principally his pretending to be the great power of God, and thinking that the gifts of the Holy Ghost were venal, and to be purchased with money. He is said to have invented the Æons, which were so many persons, of whom the godhead was composed. His concubine Helen he called the first intelligence, and mother of all things, and sometimes he called her Minerva, and himself Jupiter.

Simon Magus had gained a great number of followers, who embraced all the principles of their master, and indulged themselves in all sorts of vices and irregularities. They paid divine worship to Simon and Helen, offering to them victims and libations of wine. There is no doubt, that when St. John, St. Peter, and St. Paul, in their Epistles, warn the Christians against Heretics, false apostles, and false teachers, the Simonians are principally

pally intended. And indeed, as they were the earliest Heretics, so they were the source of most of the other Heretics, which soon after sprung up in the church. The sect of the Simonians continued down to the fourth century. Origen tells us, that they were reduced to about thirty persons, and elsewhere, that they were quite extinct.

No. XXXIII.

ANAXIMANDRIANS.

THEY are said to be the followers of Anaximander, the first philosophical Atheists, who admitted of no other substance in nature, but body.

 No. XXXIV.

ANTHROPOMORPHITES.

A Sect of Heretics so denominated from the Greek signification Man and Shape; for they, through great simplicity, taking every thing spoken in scripture, of God, in a literal sense, particularly that passage in the book of Genesis, in which it is said, that God made man after his own image, imagined him to be in the shape of a man, having real hands, feet, &c.

 No. XXXV.

ANTINOMIANS.

CERTAIN Heretics who first appeared in the year 1535. They were so called, because they

they rejected the law, as of no use under the Gospel dispensation. They held that good works do not further, nor evil hinder salvation; that the child of God cannot sin; that God never chastises any land for their sins; that murder, adultery, drunkenness, and the like, are no sins in the children of God: that an Hypocrite may have all the graces that were in Adam before his fall; and many of the like strange and impious opinions.

No. XXXVI.

CALIXTINS.

THEY are reputed to be a sect of Christians in Bohemia and Moravia: the principal point

B b

in

in which they differed from the church, was the use of the Chalice, or communicating in both kinds.

Calixtins is also a name given to those among the Lutherans, who follow the sentiments of George Calixtus, a celebrated divine, who opposed the opinion of St. Augustine, on predestination, grace, and free will.

No. XXXVII.

PREDESTINARIANS, or CALVINISTS.

THE real Calvinists are those who follow the opinions of John Calvin, from whom they derive that name, one of the principal reformers of the church in the sixteenth century, a person of great parts and industry, and of considerable learning: whose doctrine still subsists in its greatest purity at Geneva, where it was first broached, and from whence it

it was propagated. This is still the prevailing religion in the United Provinces ; in England it is confined among the Dissenters ; and in Scotland, it subsists in its utmost rigour.

The Calvinists are great advocates for the absoluteness of God's decrees ; and hold, that election and reprobation depend on the mere will of God, without any regard to the merit or demerit of mankind ; that he affords to the elect an irresistible grace, a faith that they cannot lose, which takes away the freedom of will, and necessitates all their actions to virtue. The Calvinists believe that God foreknew a determinate number, whom he pitched upon to be persons, in whom he would manifest his glory : and that having thus foreknown them, he predestinated them to be Holy, in order to which, he gives them an irresistible grace, which makes it impossible for them to be otherwise.

Nothing has occasioned more disputes, than this thorny subject of Predestination,

the Lutherans speak of it with horror, while the Calvinists contend for it with the warmest zeal: the Molinists and Jesuits preach it down as a most dangerous doctrine, whilst the Jansenists assert it as an article of faith: The Arminians, Remonstrants, and Pelagians, are all avowed enemies to predestination.

No.

A SUCCINCT ACCOUNT

OF THE DIFFERENT

SECTS IN RELIGION.

SECTION IV.

No. I.

NOETIANS.

THEY were a sect of Christian Heretics, in the third century, followers of Noetius, a philosopher of Ephesus, who pretended that he was another Moses, sent by God, and that his brother was a new Aaron. His heresy consisted in affirming that there was but one

B b 3

person

person in the Godhead ; and that the Word and the Holy Spirit, were but external denominations given to God, in consequence of different operations ; that as Creator, he is called Father ; as incarnate, Son ; and as descending on the apostles, Holy Ghost.

No. II.

BARSANIANS.

IN ecclesiastical History, they are described a sect of Heretics in the sixth century, who followed the errors of the Cainites (before described) and Theodosians ; and were so called from one Barsinius, their leader. They made their sacrifices consist in taking wheat flower on the top of their fingers, and carrying it to their mouths. They had this singularity,

larity, that they never eat meat with other men, and maintained the Holy Ghost to be a creature.

No. III.

AQUARIANS.

THEY are a sect of Christians in the primitive church, who consecrated water in the Eucharist instead of wine, under pretence of abstinence and temperance ; or because they thought it universally unlawful to eat flesh, or drink wine.

Epiphanius calls them Eucratites, from their abstinence ; St. Augustine, Aquarians, from their use of water ; and Theodoret,

B b 4

who

who says they sprang from Tatian; Hydroparastatæ, because they offered water instead of wine.

Besides these, there was another sort of Aquarians, who did not reject the use of wine as unlawful; for they administered the Eucharist in wine at evening service: but in their morning assemblies they used water, for fear the smell of wine should discover them to the heathens.

St. Cyprian, who gives a long account of these, in one of his epistles, tells us, it was the custom of the church to use water mixed with wine, because the water represents the people, as the wine does the blood of Christ; and when both are mixed together in the cup, then Christ and his people are united. The council of Carthage confirmed this practice; and Gennadius assigns two reasons for it; first, because it is according to the example of Christ; and secondly, because, when Our Saviour's side was pierced with the spear, there came out water and blood.

The

The author of the Commentaries on St. Mark, under the name of St. Jerome, gives another reason for mixing water with wine, namely, that by the one we may be purged from sin, and by the other redeemed from punishment. But there is no express command for this; nor is it at all essential to the sacrament.

No. IV.

JESUITS.

THE Jesuits were anciently called the society of Jesus; they were a most famous religious order in the Romish church, founded by Ignatius Loyola, a native of Spain, who in the year 1538, assembled ten of his companions

panions at Rome, principally chosen out of the University of Paris, and made a proposal to them to form a new order; when, after many deliberations, it was agreed to add to the three ordinary vows of Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience, a fourth, which was, to go into all countries, whither the Pope should please to send them, in order to make converts to the Romish church. Two years after, Pope Paul III. gave them a bull, by which he approved this new order, giving them a power to make such statutes as they should judge convenient; on which Ignatius was created General of the Order, which in a short time spread over all the countries in the world, to which Ignatius sent his companions, while he staid at Rome, from whence he governed the whole society.

The entire society is composed of four sorts of members; novices, scholars, spiritual and temporal coadjutors, and professed members. The novices continue so two years, after which they are admitted to make the three simple vows of Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience, in the presence of their superiors:

periors : the scholars add some spiritual exercises to their studies. The principal coadjutors assist the professed members, and also make the three simple vows : The temporal coadjutors, or lay-brothers, take care of the temporal affairs of the society : and the professed members which compose the body of the society, besides the three simple vows, add a special vow of obedience to the head of the church, in every thing relating to Missions among idolaters and heretics. They have professed houses for their professed members, and their coadjutors : Colleges in which the sciences are taught to strangers ; and seminaries in which the young Jesuits go through a course of theology and philosophy. They are governed by a General, who has four assistants, and who appoints rectors, superior of houses, provincials, visitors, and commissaries. The discipline of these houses, and especially of the Colleges, was regulated by Ignatius himself.

No.

No. V.

ARIANS.

THEY are described in Ecclesiastical History as a sect of Heretics, who followed the opinions of Arius, a Presbyter of Alexandria, in the time of the patriarch Alexander. He broached his heresy in the beginning of the fourth century. The Arians denied the three persons in the Holy Trinity, to be of the same substance; asserted that there was a time when the son was not; that he was created in time, mutable in nature, and like the angels, liable to sin; and that being united to human flesh, he supplied the place of a human soul, and consequently was subject to sufferings and pain. In their doxologies they ascribed 'Glory to the Father, ' through the Son, and in the Holy Ghost.'

No. VI.

COLARBASIANS.

THEY were a sect of Christian Heretics in the second century, who maintained the whole plenitude and perfection of truth and religion to be contained in the Greek alphabet; and that it was upon this account that Jesus Christ was called the Alpha and Omega: They rejected the Old Testament, and received only a part of St. Luke's gospel, and ten of St. Paul's epistles in the New.

No. VII.

The Religion of the Savages in Canada.

WE are indebted for what we know of the Savages in Canada, to the Baron de Hontan,

tan,* who resided among them ten years. He tells us, that in some conversation with them, which he relates on the subject of religion, he did not always get the better in the dispute ; it is, indeed, surprising, a Huron should use all the subtilty of logic to combat the Christian religion, and be as perfect in every trick of the schools, as if he had studied Scotus. It has been suspected the Baron had a mind to throw a ridicule on the religion he had been brought up in, and has put arguments in the mouth of a savage he dared not make use of himself. The Baron has given us a very accurate account of their philosophy, laws, manners, and customs, with other anecdotes equally amusing and entertaining, but a recital would lead me so much out of my way, as probably to lose sight of the subject I am pursuing. I shall therefore proceed to their philosophy and religion : First, All the savages maintain there is a God ; his existence they prove by the formation of the universe, which manifests the Almighty power of its author ; from whence it follows, (say they) that man is not the

work

* Baron Hontan's Travels.

work of chance, but of a principal superior in wisdom and knowledge, which *they* call the Great Mind. This Great Mind contains all, appears in all, acts in all, and gives motion to all things. In short, all we see, all we conceive, is this God, who subsists without bounds, and without body, ought not to be represented by any figure whatever, and therefore they adore him in all his works. This is so true, that when they see any thing remarkably fine, curious, or surprising, especially the sun and stars, they break out in this exclamation: Oh! Great Mind, we see thee every where!

Secondly, They say the soul is immortal, because, if it were not, all men would be equally happy in this life, for God, being infinitely perfect and wise, could not have created some for happiness, and others for misery: they maintain that God, for certain reasons, above our comprehension, wills, that a certain number of beings should suffer in this world, that he may recompence them in the next; and therefore cannot bear to hear Christians say, such a one was unhappy, because

because he was killed or burnt ; asserting that what we call unhappiness, is only in our own ideas ; because nothing is done, but by the will of this infinitely perfect Being, whose conduct can neither be uncertain or capricious.

Thirdly, The Supreme Mind has given men reason, to enable them to discern good from evil, and to follow the rules of justice, equity, and reason.

Fourthly, Tranquillity of the soul is highly pleasing to the Supreme Mind ; that on the contrary, he detests the tumult of the passions, which makes men wicked.

Fifthly, Life is a sleep, death an awakening, which gives us intelligence of things visible and invisible.

Sixthly, The reason of man, not being capable of lifting itself up to the knowledge of things above the earth ; it is needless and troublesome to dive into invisible things.

Seventhly, After death, our souls go into a certain place, in which we cannot tell whether

whether the good are happy, or evil unhappy : because we know not whether our ideas of happiness and misery coincide with those of the supreme Spirit or Mind.

No. VIII.

CERDONIANS.

THEY were very ancient Heretics, who maintained most of the errors of Simon Magus, Saturnel, and other Gnostics.

They asserted two principles, the one good, the other evil ; this last, according to them, was creator of the world, and the God that appeared under the old law : The first, whom they called Unknown, was the father of Jesus Christ, who, they taught was only incarnate in appearance, and was not born of a virgin, nor suffered death, but in appearance.

No. IX.

PRISCILLIANISTS.

THEY were Christian Heretics, so named from their leader Priscillian, a Spaniard by birth, and bishop of Avila. He is said to have practised magic, and to have maintained the principal errors of the Manichees (treated of in the next chapter) : but this peculiar tenet was, that it is lawful to take false oaths, in order to support one's cause and interest.

No. X.

MANICHEES.

A Sect of Christian Heretics in the third century, and followers of Manes, who made

made his appearance in the reign of the emperor Probus, pretending to be the comforter, whom our Saviour promised to send into the world. He taught that there are two principles or Gods, co-eternal and independant on each other, the one the author of all evil, and the other of all good ; a doctrine which he borrowed from the Persian Magi.

He held that our souls were made by the good Principle, and our bodies by the evil one, and that the souls of his followers passed through the elements to the moon, and from thence to the sun, where being purified, they then went to God, and became united with his essence ; but as for the souls of other men, they either went to hell, or were united to other bodies. He alledged that Christ had his residence in the Sun, the Holy Ghost in the air, Wisdom in the Moon, and the Father in the abyfs of Light. He is also charged with denying the resurrection, and condemning marriage ; with teaching that Christ was the serpent that tempted Eve : with forbidding the use of eggs, cheefe, milk,

and wine, as proceeding from the bad principle : with using a different kind of baptism from that of the church : with teaching that magistrates were not to be obeyed, and with condemning the most lawful wars.

No. XI.

AGNOITES.

A SECT of Heretics that appeared about the year 370. They were the followers of Theophronius, the Cappadocian, and called in question the omniscience of the supreme Being : alledging, that he knew things past only by memory, and things future only by a precarious uncertain prescience. There was likewise another sect of Heretics, called by the same name, who maintained that Christ, with respect to his human nature, was ignorant of many things, and particularly of the day of Judgment.

No.

No. XII.

INDEPENDENTS.

A Sect of Protestants in England and Holland, so called from their independency on other churches, and their maintaining that each church or congregation has sufficient power to act and perform every thing relating to religious government within itself, and is no way subject or accountable to other churches or their deputies. The present Independents differ from the Presbyterians only, in their church government, in being generally more attached to the doctrines distinguished by the term orthodoxy, &c. and in administering the Lord's Supper at the close of the afternoon's service. The several sects of Baptists are all independents with respect to Church government.

No. XIII.

BARULES.

WE find these people in Ecclesiastical History represented as a set of Heretics, who held that the son of God had only the phantom of a body; that souls were created before the world, and that they lived all at one time, with many other absurdities equally gross and impious.

No. XIV.

BASILIDIANS.

THEY were a tribe of distinguished Heretics, about the second century, they had a leader named Basilides, a disciple of Menander.

der. He flourished in Egypt about the year 112, and there chiefly propogated his Heresy.

Bafilides, in the creation of things, admitted a certain successive scale, in which each link of beings created the succeeding; and were themselves created by the preceding; and consequently that one being only, owed its existence to God. He also taught that there were 365 heavens, between the earth and the Empyrean; and that each of these heavens had a moving and creating angel assigned to it: which angel was itself created by the next angel above him.

With regard to the Christian religion, Bafilides taught that Christ did not really suffer upon the cross; but that Simon the Cyrenean, was substituted in his room: that the promiscuous copulation of men and women was lawful: that a Christian may renounce the faith to avoid martyrdom; and that the soul alone is to be saved, and the body never to rise from its state of corruption.

No. XV.

PAULIONISTS.

THE Paulionists, in Church history, were a sect of Christian Heretics of the third century, disciples of Paul Samosatensis, bishop of Antioch, who denied Christ's divinity, maintaining that we call him the son of God, we do not thereby mean that he is really and truly God; but only that he was so perfect a man, and so superior in virtue to all others, that he has this name given him by way of eminence. The Paulionists continued to the fifth century, notwithstanding the prohibition of the emperor Constantine the Great, who forbade them, and other Heretics to hold public assemblies.

No. XVI.

MASSALIANS.

THE Massalians were a set of Enthusiasts, who sprang up about the year 361, in the reign of the emperor Constantius, who maintained that men had two souls, a celestial, and a diabolical one, and that the latter is driven out by prayer. They pretended to prophecy, and affirmed that they could see the Trinity with their corporeal eyes; and believed that the holy Ghost descended visibly upon them, especially at the time of their ordination, when they trod the devil under foot, and danced upon him.

No.

No. XVII.

JOACHIMITES.

THEY were the disciples of Joachim, a Cistercian Monk, who was an abbot of Flora, in Calabria, and a great pretender to inspiration. The Joachimites were particularly fond of certain ternaries; the father, they said, operated from the beginning, till the coming of the son; the son, from that time to theirs, which was the year 1260, and from that time, the Holy Spirit was to operate in his turn. They also divided every thing relating to men, to doctrine, and the manner of living, into three classes, according to the three persons in the Trinity: the first ternary was that of men; of whom the first class was that of married men, which had

had lasted during the whole period of the Father; the second was that of Clerks, which had lasted during the time of the Son; and the last was that of the Monks, in which there was to be an uncommon effusion of grace by the Holy Spirit: the second ternary was that of doctrine, viz. the Old Testament, the New, and the everlasting Gospel; the first they ascribed to the Father, the second to the Son, and the third to the Holy Spirit: a third ternary consisted in the manner of living, viz. under the Father, men lived according to the flesh; under the son, they lived according to the flesh and the spirit; and under the Holy Ghost, they were to live according to the spirit only.

No.

No. XVIII.

MARCIONITES.

CHRISTIAN Heretics, in the second century, thus denominated from their leader Marcion, who maintained, that there were two principles or Gods, a good and a bad one Origen affirms, that he held there was a God of the Jews, a God of the Christians, and a God of the Gentiles. It is said, that he denied the resurrection of the body, condemned marriage, and taught that Our Saviour, when he descended into Hell, discharged Cain, the Sodomites, and other impious wretches out of that place of torment. He rejected all the Old Testament, and received only part of St. Luke's Gospel, and ten of St. Paul's epistles in the New.

No. XIX.

PELAGIANS.

A Christian Sect, who appeared about the latter end of the fourth century, or the beginning of the fifth.

Pelagius, the author of this sect, was born in Wales, and his name was Morgan, which in the Welch language signifies *sea-born*, from whence he had his Latin name Pelagius. Some of our ancient historians pretend that he was abbot of Bangor; but this is impossible, because the British monasteries were of a later date. St. Austin gives him the character of a very pious man, and a Christian of no vulgar rank: according to the same father, he travelled to Rome, where he

he associated himself with persons of the greatest learning and figure; and wrote his Commentaries on St. Paul's epistles, and his letters to Melania and Demetrias; but being charged with Heresy, he left Rome, and went to Africa, and from thence to Jerusalem, where he settled. He died somewhere in the East, but where is uncertain. He was charged with maintaining the following doctrines:

First, That Adam was by nature mortal, and whether he had sinned or not, would certainly have died.

Secondly, That the consequences of Adam's sin were confined to his own person.

Thirdly, That new-born infants are in the same condition with Adam before the fall.

Fourthly, That the law qualified men for the kingdom of heaven, and was founded upon equal promises with the gospel.

Fifthly, That the general resurrection of the dead, does not follow in virtue of Our Saviour's resurrection.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, That the Grace of God is given according to our merits.

Seventhly, That this grace is not granted for the performance of every moral act; the liberty of the will, and information in points of duty, being sufficient, &c.

Pelagius's sentiments were condemned by several councils in Africa, and by a synod at Antioch.

No. XX.

SEMI-PELAGIANS.

THERE was a sect of these latter Christians, who with the Orthodox, allowed of original sin, but denied that the liberty of the will could be so far impaired thereby, that men could not of themselves do something

which might induce God to afford his grace to one more than another : and as to election, they held, that it depended on our perseverance : God chusing only such to eternal life, as continued stedfast in the faith.

No. XXI.

ENERGUMENS.

THEY were persons supposed to be possessed by the devil, concerning whom there were many regulations among the primitive Christians.

They were denied baptism, and the Eucharist ; at least this was the practice of some churches : and though they were under the care of Exorcists, yet it was thought a becoming act of Charity, to let them have the public prayers of the church, at which they were permitted to be present.

No.

No. XXII.

MELCHIZEDECHIANS.

THEY are reported to be a sect which arose about the beginning of the third century, and affirmed that Melchisedech was not a man, but a heavenly power, superior to Jesus Christ; for Melchisedech they said, was the intercessor and mediator of the angels; but Jesus Christ was so only for men, and his priesthood only a copy of that Melchisedech. This heresy was revived in Egypt, by one Hierax, who pretended that Melchisedech was the Holy Ghost.

No. XXIII.

BERENGARIANS.

A Religious sect of the eleventh century, which adhered to the opinion of Berengarius, who, even in those days, strenuously asserted, that the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, is not really and essentially, but only figuratively changed into the body and blood of Christ.

His followers were divided in opinion, as to the Eucharist: they all agreed, that the elements are not essentially changed in effect: others admitted a change in part, and others an entire change, with this restriction, that to those who communicated unworthily, the elements were changed back again.

No. XXIV.

ARMINIANS.

A Sect of Christians, that arose in Holland, by a separation from the Calvinists. They are great asserters of free will, and speak very ambiguously of the prescience of God. They look on the doctrine of the Trinity as a point not necessary to salvation ; and many of them hold, that there is no precept in Scripture, which enjoins us to adore the Holy Ghost ; and that the Son is not equal to the Father.

No. XXV.**ARTOTYRITES.**

A Sect in the Primitive Church, who used bread and cheese in celebrating the Eucharist.

D d 2

They

They were a branch of the Montanists, and appeared in the second century. They admitted women into the priesthood and Episcopacy; and Epiphanius tells us, that it was a common thing to see a body of seven girls enter their church, dressed in white, and each carrying a torch in her hand, where they wept, and bewailed the wretchedness of human nature.

No. XXVI.

EUNUCHS.

A Sect of Heretics in the third century, who were mad enough to castrate not only those of their own persuasion, but even all others that they could lay hold of: they took

their rise from the example of Origen, who (misunderstanding the following words of Our Saviour — “ And Eunuchs, who made themselves Eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven,”) castrated himself.

No. XXVII.

MENNONITES.

THEY are a Sect of baptists in Holland, from their leader Mennon Simonis of Friesland, who lived in the sixteenth century. This sect believe that the New Testament is the only rule of faith ; that the terms Person and Trinity, are not to be used in speaking of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; that

D.d 3

the

the first man was not created perfect ; that it is unlawful to swear, or to wage war upon any occasion ; that infants are not the proper subjects of baptism : and that ministers of the gospel ought to receive no salary.

No. XXVIII,

ANTITACTES,

A Name given to a branch of the Gnostics (treated of before), who held that God was good and just ; but that a creature had created evil : that we are therefore to oppose this author of evil, in order to avenge God of his enemy.

No.

No. XXIX.

ARNOLDISTS.

A Sect of Separatists, so called from their leader Arnold of Bresse, a great declaimer against the wealth and vices of the clergy. He is also charged with preaching against baptism and the Eucharist.

No. XXX.

PAULICIANS.

CHRISTIAN Heretics of the seventh century, disciples of one Constantine, a native

of Armenia, and a favourer of the errors of *Manes*; who, as the name of Manichees was become odious to all nations, gave those of his sect the title of Paulicians, on pretence that they followed only the doctrine of St. Paul. One of their most detestable maxims was, not to give alms to the poor, that they might not contribute to the support of creatures, who were the works of the bad God.*

No. XXXI.

BETHLEHEMITES.

THEY are a religious order of men, and distinguished by a red star with five rays, which they wore on their breast, in memory of the star that appeared to the wise men, and

* See Manichees, before treated of.

and conducted them to Bethlehem. There is another order of Bethlehemites still subsisting in the Spanish West Indies, who are habited like Capuchins, with this difference, that they wear a leather girdle, instead of a cord, and on their right side an escutcheon representing the nativity of Our Saviour.

No. XXXII.

UBIQUITARIANS.

A Sect of Heretics, so called, because they maintained that the body of Jesus Christ is *ubique*, every where, or in every place.

Brentius, one of the early reformers, is said to have first broached this error in Germany, about the year 1560.

Melanch-

Melanchton immediately declared against it, as introducing a kind of confusion in the two natures of Jesus Christ. On the other hand, it was espoused by Flacius, Illyricus, Osiander, and others. The universities of Leipzig, and Wirtemberg in vain opposed this heresy, which gained ground daily. Six of their leaders, namely, Smidelin, Selnecker, Musculus, Chemnitius, Chytræus, and Cornerus, having a meeting in 1577, in the monastery of Berg, composed a kind of creed, or formulary of faith, in which the ubiquity of Christ's body was the leading article. However, the Ubiquitarians were not quite agreed among themselves; some holding, that Jesus Christ, even during his mortal life, was every where; and others, dating the ubiquity of his body from the time of his ascension only.

No.

No. XXXIII.

EUNOMIANS.

CHRISTIAN Heretics in the fourth century; they were a branch of Arians (mentioned before) and took their name from Eunomius bishop of Cyzicus, who was instructed by Ætius, in the points which were then controverted in the church, after having at first followed the profession of arms. Eunomius so well answered the designs of his master, and declaimed so vehemently against the divinity of the word, that the people had recourse to the authority of the Prince, and had him banished: but the Arians obtained his recall, and elected him bishop of Cyzicus.

The manners and doctrines of the Eunomians were the same with those of the Arians.

No.

No. XXXIV.

MONOTHELITES.

THEY were a sect of Christians in the seventh century, so called from their maintaining that, though there were two natures in Jesus Christ, the Human and Divine, there was but one Will, which was the Divine.

No. XXXV.

BORRELLISTS.

THEY are a Christian sect in Holland; they are a kind of Anabaptists; but they have

have some very particular opinions. They reject the use of churches, of the sacraments, public prayer, and all other external acts of worship. They assert, that all the Christian churches of the world have degenerated from the pure apostolical doctrines, because they have suffered the word of God, which is infallible, to be expounded, or rather corrupted by doctors, who are not infallible. They lead a very austere life, and employ a great part of their goods in alms.

No. XXXVI.

MILLENARIANS.

THIS is a name given to those, who, in the primitive ages, believed that the saints will one day reign on earth with Christ, a thousand

thousand years; the Millenarians held, that after the coming of Antichrist, and the destruction of all nations, which shall follow, there shall be a first resurrection of the just alone: that all who shall be found upon earth, both good and bad, shall continue alive: the good to obey the just, who are risen as their princes: the bad to be conquered by the just, and to be subject to them: That Jesus Christ will then descend from heaven in his glory: that the city of Jerusalem will be rebuilt, enlarged, embellished, and its gates stand open night and day.

They applied to this new Jerusalem, what is said in the Apocalypse, chapter xxi. and to the temple all that is written in Ezekiel xxxvi. Here they pretended that Jesus Christ will fix the seat of his empire, and reign a thousand years with the saints, patriarchs, and prophets, who will enjoy perfect and uninterrupted felicity.

This reign of Our Saviour on earth is usually stiled the Millenium, or reign of a thousand years.

No. XXXVII.

NOVATIONS.

THE were a Christian Sect which sprang up in the third century, so called from Novatian, a priest of Rome, or Novatus, an African bishop, who separated from the communion of Pope Cornelius, whom Novatian charged with a criminal lenity towards those who had apostatized during the persecution of Decius. He denied the church's power of remitting mortal sins upon the offenders repentance : and at last went so far as to deny, that the apostles could ever hope for pardon, even from God himself. Novatus coming to Rome, joined with the followers of Novatian, and added to these rigid doctrines another, which was the unlawfulness of second

cond marriages, against which, this became as severe as against Apostates : denying communion to such as married a second time after baptism, and treating widows, who married again as adulteresses. The two leaders were proscribed and declared Heretics, not for excluding penitents from communion, but for denying that the church had the power of remitting sins.

No. XXXVIII.

EUTYCHIANS.

IN the History of the Primitive Churches, they are stiled Heretics, who prevailed in the fifth century, and who embraced the errors of the monk Eutyches, maintaining that there was only one nature in Christ. The Divine Nature, according to them, had so entirely

entirely swallowed up the Human, that the latter could not be distinguished; insomuch that Jesus was merely God, and had nothing of humanity but the appearance. This Heresy was condemned in a council held at Constantinople in 448, which sentence was confirmed by the general council of Chalcedon in 451.

No. XXXIX.

MUGGLETONIANS.

THEY were a religious sect which arose in England about the year 1657, so denominated from their leader Lodowick Muggleton, a journeyman Taylor, who with his associate Reeves, set up for great prophets, pretending, as it is said, of having an absolute power of saving and damning whom they pleased: and giving out, that they were the two last witnesses of God, that should appear before the end of the world.

E c

No.

No. XL.

PHOTINIANS.

A Sect of Christians in the fourth century, so called from Photinus, their chief, who was bishop of Sirmich, and maintained that Jesus Christ was true man, but not true God, not born before all ages; and that he only began to be Christ, when the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the river Jordan. These doctrines were condemned in several assemblies and particularly by the Arians, in a synod held at Sirmich, in the year 351.

No.

No. XLI.

SAMPSEANS.

THEY were a very ancient sect, who were properly neither Jews, Christians, nor Gentiles, though they took their name from the Hebrew word *Semes*, Sun; as though they worshipped that planet. They acknowledged only one God; washed themselves often; and in almost every thing attached themselves to the religion of the Jews. Many among them, abstained wholly from eating of flesh. Scaliger will have the Sampsians to be the same with the Esseni, and indeed the Sampsians, Esseni, Alcesaites, and Massalians, appear to be no more than so many different names for the same sect.

No.

No. XLII.

NESTORIANS.

THEY were a Christian sect, the followers of Nestorius, the bishop and patriarch of Constantinople, who about the year 429, taught that there were two persons in Jesus Christ, the Divine, and the Human, which are united not hypostatically, or substantially, but in a mystical manner, whence he concluded, that Mary, was the mother of Christ, and not the mother of God. For this opinion Nestorius was condemned and deposed by the council of Ephesus; and the decree of this council was confirmed by the emperor Theodosius, who banished the bishop to a monastery.

Those Christians, who at this day are called Nestorians and Chaldeans, are very numerous,

numerous, and are spread over Mesopotamia, and along the river Tigris and Euphrates : they are even got into the Indies, and into Tartary and China. Those of India settled there, under a Nestorian priest called John, who, in the year 1145, got himself declared king of Indostan, and grew very famous, under the name of Preston John. The Nestorians, though they speak the language of the respective countries, only officiate in the Chaldee or Syriac tongue. The Nestorian monks are habited in a black gown, tied with a leathern girdle, and wear a blue turban. The nuns are dressed much after the same manner, excepting that they tie a kind of black veil about their heads, and about their chins. They must be forty years old before they take the monastic habit.

No. XLIII.

BRACHMANS.

THEY are a sect of Indian philosophers, known to the ancient Greeks by the name of Gymnosophists. The ancient Brachmans lived upon herbs and pulse, and abstained from every thing that had life in it. They lived in solitude, without matrimony, and without property ; and they wished ardently for death, considering life only as a burthen. The modern Brachmans make up one of the tribes of the Banians, (treated of in a former part of this work) They are the priests of that people, and perform their office of praying and reading the law, with several mimical gestures and quavering voice. They believe, that in the beginning, nothing but God and
the

the water existed; and that the Supreme Being, desirous to create the world, caused the leaf of a tree, in the shape of a child playing with its great toe in its mouth, to float in the water: from its navel there issued out a flower, whence Brama drew his original, who was entrusted by God with the creation of the world, and presides over it with an absolute sway. They make no distinction between the souls of men and brutes, but say the dignity of the human soul consists in being placed in a better body, and having more room to display its faculties. They allow of rewards and punishments after this life: and have so great a veneration for cows, that they look on themselves as blessed, if they can but die with the tail of one in their hand. They have preserved some noble fragments of the knowledge of the ancient Brachmans. They are skilful arithmeticians, and calculate with great exactness, eclipses of the sun and moon. They are remarkable for their religious austerity. One of them has been known to make a vow to wear about his neck a heavy collar of iron, for a considerable time: another, to chain himself by the foot to a

tree, with a firm resolution to die in that place; and another to walk in wooden shoes stuck full of nails in the inside. Their divine worship consists chiefly of processions, made in honour of their deities. They have a college at Banara, a city seated on the Ganges.

No. XLIV.

BOURIGNONISTS.

THE name of a sect among the Low Country Protestants, being such as follow the doctrine of Antoinette Bourignon, a native of Lisle, and apostate of the Roman Catholic religion.

The

The principles of this sect bear a very near resemblance with those of the Quietists, Quakers, or Fanatics.

They conduct themselves by pretended revelations.

No. XLV.

ETHNOPHRONES.

IN Ecclesiastical History, they are described as Heretics of the seventh century, who professing Christianity, joined thereto all the ceremonies and absurdities of Paganism, such as judicial astrology, divinations of all kinds, &c. And who observed all the feasts, times, and seasons of the Gentiles, who in matters of religion, were Pagans, or worshippers of false gods or idols, they were neither Jews or Christians, but followed the superstitions of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, &c.

No.

No. XLVI.

HERACLEONITES.

A Sect of Christians, the followers of Heracleon, who refined upon the Gnostic divinity, and maintained that the world was not the immediate production of the Son of God, but that he was only the occasional cause of its being created by the Demiurgus. The Heracleonites denied the authority of the prophecies of the Old Testament, maintaining that they were mere random sounds in the air; and that St. John the Baptist was the only true voice that directed to the Messiah.

No.

No. XLVII.

BROWNISTS.

WE are told in Ecclesiastical History, that they were a religious sect that sprung up in England towards the end of the sixteenth century. Their leader was one Robert Brown, a native of Northampton. They separated from the established church, on account of its discipline and form of government. They equally disliked Episcopacy and Presbyterianism. They condemned the solemn celebration of marriages in churches, maintaining that matrimony, being a political contract, the confirmation of it ought to proceed from the civil magistrate. They rejected all forms of prayer, and held that the Lord's prayer was not to be recited as a prayer, being given only as a model, upon which to form our prayers.

No.

No. XLVIII.

BULGARIANS.

THESE were a sect of Heretics, who among other errors, held that men ought to believe no Scripture but the New Testament; that baptism was not necessary to infants; that husbands that conversed with their wives could not be saved: and that an oath was absolutely unlawful.

No. XLIX.

HIERACITES.

WE read in Church History of a sect of Christian Heretics in the third century, under that name, and supposed to be so called from

from their leader Hierax, a philosopher of Egypt : who taught that Melchisedech was the Holy Ghost, denied the resurrection, and condemned marriage : he likewise held that no one could be saved, who died before he arrived at years of discretion.

The disciples of Hierax taught that the Word, or Son of God, was contained in the Father, as a little vessel is contained in a great one.

No. L.

HUGUENOTS.

IT was originally, as appears, a name given by way of contempt to the Calvinists of France.

The

The name had its rise in the year 1560, but authors are not agreed, as to its origin. The most plausible opinion, however, is that of Pasquier, who observes, that at Tours, the place where they were first thus denominated, the people had a notion, that an apparition, or hobgoblin, called King Hugon, strolled about the streets in the night time ; from whence, as those of the reformed religion met chiefly in the night to pray, &c. they called them Huguenots, that is, the disciples of King Hugon.

No. LI.

BARALOTTS.

A Sect of Heretics at Bologna, in Italy, among whom all things, even their wives and children, were in common. They were also called Obedientes, or Compliers, because they readily complied with every thing that tended to promote debauchery.

No. LII.

BEGHARDI.

THEY were a certain sect of Heretics which arose in Germany, and the Low Countries, about the end of the thirteenth century, They made profession of monastical life, without observing celibacy ; and maintained (if they are not scandalized by the Monks) that man could become as perfect in this life, as he shall be in heaven : that every intellectual nature, is of itself happy, without the succour of grace ; and that he, who is in this state of perfection ought to perform no good works, nor worship the host.

THE

THE FOLLOWING
ARE SOME OF THE MOST PREVAILING
SECTS, IN RELIGION

In EUROPE among the MODERNS :

THE WHOLE CONCLUDING

With the Established Religion of this Nation.

SECTION V.

No. I.

METHODISTS.

THEY, though of modern date, like the Fanatics of old, are composed of wild enthusiastic visionary persons, who pretend to revelation and inspiration, and a divine impulse from heaven.

There

There is a degree of assent (says Mr. Locke) which, with some men, has the same authority as either Faith or Reason, and that is Enthusiasm; which by laying aside Reason, would set up Revelation without it; whereby, in effect, it takes away both Reason and Revelation, and substitutes, in the room of it, the ungrounded fancies of a man's own brain, and assumes them for a foundation, both of opinion and conduct. They pretend to be enlightened, but it is generally, I fear, with that light, which (as an ingenious author observes) shines through a crack in the skull. They likewise pretend to more sanctity and purity of life, than falls to the share of other men. Immediate revelation being a much easier way for men to establish their opinions, and regulate their conduct by, than the tedious labour of strict reasoning; it is no wonder that some have been very apt to pretend to it, especially in such of their opinions and actions as they cannot account for, by the ordinary methods of knowledge, and principles of reason. Hence we see that in all ages, men, in whom melancholy has mixed with devotion, or whose conceit of

F f

themselves

themselves has raised them into an opinion of greater familiarity with God, than is allowed others; have often flattered themselves with the persuasion of an immediate intercourse with the Deity, and frequent communications from the divine spirit.*

They go about preaching, singing hymns in tabernacles, in the fields, highways, and private houses, they increase daily to an alarming degree in this country. They maintain that impious and pernicious doctrine, contrary to what is laid down by Our Saviour and his Holy Apostles, that nothing more than Faith alone is necessary to Salvation, which may prove a fatal mistake to their deluded and misguided followers, and of the most serious consequence to their eternal happiness, if we believe the Scriptures, particularly that part where St. Paul says,† ‘What doeth it profit, though a man say he hath Faith, and hath not Works, can Faith save him?’ And again, ‘Even so, Faith, if it hath not Works, is dead, being alone.’ And again, ‘But wilt thou know,
O vain

* Locke on Human Understanding.

† St. James, chap. ii.

O vain man, that Faith, without Works, is dead : By Works a man is justified, and not by Faith only.' And lastly, ' For as the Body, without the Spirit, is dead, so Faith, without Works, is dead also.'

This single refutation alone, from the Holy Scripture, is, one would think, sufficient to explode such pernicious doctrine.

Though after all, the doctrine laid down by the Methodists, however absurd or repugnant to Scripture, is far from novel ; the sentiments and opinions of the Aetians, (treated of in Section II. No. XX. of this work) in the reign of Constantius, in the year 336, exactly correspond with this sect in the principal tenets.

No. II.

ROMAN CATHOLICS.

THE Roman church distinguishes itself now by the name of Catholic, in opposition to all those who have separated from her communion, and whom she considers as only Heretics and Schismatics, and herself only as the true Christian Church. The celebration of mass in the church of Rome, consists in the office or prayers used in the Eucharist, or in other words, consecrating the bread and wine, into the body and blood of Christ, and offering them so transubstantiated, as an expiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead.

As the mass is in general believed to be a representation of the passion of our blessed Saviour,

viour, so every action of the priest, and every particular part of the service, is supposed to allude to the particular circumstances of his death and passion. Among the many absurdities abounding in the Romish church, Indulgences is not one of the least ; they consist in a remission of the punishment due to sins, granted by the church, and supposed to save the sinner from Purgatory. Clement VI. in his decretal, which is generally received by the church of Rome, declares, that our Saviour has left an infinite treasure of merits, arising from his own sufferings, besides those of the blessed virgin, and the saints : and that the pastors and guides of the church, and more especially the Popes, who are the sovereign disposers of this treasure, have authority to apply it to the living, by virtue of the keys, and to the dead, by way of suffrage, to discharge them from their respective proportions of punishment, by taking just so much merit out of this general treasure, as they conceive the debt requires, and offering it to God. It was the great abuse of indulgences that contributed not a little to the first reformation of religion in Germany,

where Martin Luther began first to declaim against the preachers of indulgences, and afterwards against indulgences themselves : for since that time, the Popes have been more sparing in the exercise of this power : however, they still carry on a great trade with them in the Indies, where they are purchased at two reals a piece, and sometimes more. The diviness, both in the Romish and Lutheran Churches maintain, that after *consecration*, the body and blood of Christ Our Saviour, are substantially present, together with the substance of the bread and wine ; this is called transubstantiation, which is a main point in the Romish religion, and is rejected by all Protestants, the former maintaining the transubstantiation to be real, the latter only figurative ; interpreting the text *Hoc est corpus meum* ; ‘ This signifies my ‘ body,’ but the council of Trent stood up strenuously for the literal sense of the verb *est*, and say expressly, that in Transubstantiation, the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, are truly, really, and substantially under the species of bread and wine. The controversies about this point have been almost innumerable.

No.

* Vide Jesuits, page 377.

No. III.

DISSENTERS.

THEY are separatists from the service and worship of the Church of England. They are a sect of Protestants, and stiled Presbyterians, from their maintaining that the government of the church, appointed in the New Testament, was by Presbyteries, that is, by ministers and ruling elders, associated for its government and discipline. The Protestant Dissenters differ in a small degree from the Anabaptists (in England) except in the article of Infant baptism; as may be seen in a confession of faith, published in the year 1689, by the representatives of their congregation.

In respect to their doctrine, they are generally reputed to be Orthodox, in the faith; and most foreign Protestants, except some few of the Lutherans, agree with them.

No. IV.

* *DEISTS,*

IN the modern sense of the word, are those persons, in Christian Countries, who acknowledging all the obligations and duties of natural religion, disbelieve the Christian scheme, or revealed religion. They are styled

* These are a sect too numerous I fear, and reflect disgrace and reproach on human understanding, in this refined and enlightened age, and fitting only those dark times of ignorance and superstition; we should therefore pray to God to deliver them from all false doctrine, heresy, and schism, from hardness of heart, and contempt of his word and commandment: and that it would graciously please him to bring into the way of truth, all such *as these*, who have erred and are deceived,

stiled Deists, from their belief in God alone, in opposition to Christians. The learned and ingenious Dr. Clarke has very ably explained the sentiments of these kind of people, and I cannot do better, than in giving them to my readers in his own words; to take the denomination, says the learned Doctor, in the most extensive signification, I shall distinguish Deists into four parts.

First, such as pretend to believe the existence of an eternal, infinite, independent, intelligent being, and who teach that this supreme being made the world, though they fancy he does not at all concern himself in the management of it. Secondly, Those who believe not only the Being, but also the providence of God, with respect to the natural world, but who not allowing any difference between moral good and evil, deny that God takes any notice of the morally good or evil actions of men; these things depending, as they imagine, on the arbitrary constitutions of human laws. Thirdly, Those who having right apprehensions concerning the natural attributes of God, and his All-governing

governing Providence, and some notion of his moral perfections also : yet being prejudiced against the notion of the immortality of the human soul, believe that men perish entirely at death, and that one generation shall perpetually succeed another, without any future restoration or renovation of things. Fourthly, Such as believe the existence of a supreme Being, together with his providence, in the government of the world, as also the obligations of natural religion ; but so far only as these things are discoverable by the mere light of nature alone, without believing any divine revelation. These last are the only true Deists, says the Doctor ; but as the principles of these men would naturally lead them to embrace the christian revelation, the learned author concludes there is now no consistent scheme of Deism in the world.

No. V.

J E W S.

THE Jews are one of the most ancient bodies of people now existing, who profess obedience to the laws and religion of Moses; before whom every man worshipped God according to the inclination of his own heart. How far the religious ceremonies of the Jews were copied from those of the Egyptians, among whom they had so long sojourned; or how far they were typical of something future, are questions I leave to be discussed by some learned divines. But as to the religion of the modern Jews, it is a manifest absurdity; since being without a temple, sacrifices, &c. it cannot be considered as subsisting any longer.

The

The religion of the Jews is supposed to be full of mysteries. The whole nation, according to St. Augustin, was a mystery, as it represented, or was a type of the people of Christ, and the Christian religion. Whatever was commanded or forbidden them was figurative, and their sacrifices, priesthood, &c. included mysteries. The prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, in the Jewish books, are likewise figurative and mysterious.

The modern, as well as the ancient Jews, are very superstitious in the observance of the sabbath, they carry neither arms, nor gold, nor silver about them; and are permitted neither to touch these, nor a candle, nor any thing belonging to the fire; on which account they light up lamps on Friday, which burn till the end of the sabbath.

In respect to sacrifices, the ancient Jews had two sorts, taking the word in its largest signification: the first were offerings of tythes, first fruits, cakes, wine, oil, honey, and the like: and the last offerings of slaughtered animals. When an Israelite offered a
loaf

loaf, or a cake, the priest broke it in two parts, and setting aside that half which he reserved for himself, broke the other into crumbs, poured oil, wine, incense, and salt upon it, and spread the whole upon the fire of the altar. If these offerings were accompanied with the sacrifice of an animal, they were thrown upon the victim, to be consumed along with it. If the offerings were of the ears of new corn, they were parched at the fire, rubbed in the hand, and then offered to the priest in a vessel, over which he poured oil, incense, wine, and salt, and then burnt it upon the altar, having first taken as much of it as of right belonged to himself.

There is likewise a ceremony of the Jews observed on the Sabbath, in the evening, when every one of the family is come home. At that time they light a taper, or lamp, with two wicks at least; the master of the family then takes a cup, with some wine, mixed with fragrant spices; and after having repeated a passage or two of Scripture; as for example, 'I will take the cup of salvation,

tion, &c.' Psalm cxvi. and, 'The Jews had light and gladness, &c.' Esther viii. He blesses the wine and spices: afterwards he blesses the light of the fire, and then casts his eyes on his hands and nails, as remembering that he is going to work. The whole is intended to signify, that the Sabbath is over, and is from that moment divided from the day of labour which follows.

The Jews were formerly stiled Hebrews or Israelites; they took this name at their return from the captivity of Babylon, and have retained it ever since, it coming from Judah, which was the only tribe that made any considerable figure at that time among them: their œconomy, both civil and military, and also their religious customs, is much of it related in the Old Testament, (to which the reader may refer.) I shall only here observe, that among the modern Jews, when any person is buried, his nearest relations, such as father, mother, child, wife, husband, brother, sister, &c. keep the house a week after the funeral, sitting on the ground all the while, excepting on the sabbath day, when

when they go to prayers : during this week, they are neither to work, nor dispatch any business : the husband and wife are to lodge afunder, and there come people, morning and evening, to say the customary prayers, with these relations, which is concluded with a prayer for the soul of the deceased : some repeat prayers for their friends souls in the synagogue, every morning for eleven months together, after this week is expired ; which arises from an opinion they have, that the blessed enjoy the beatific vision in paradise, and the wicked are tormented in hell.

And that though some will be damned to all eternity, yet others only for a time : others among them believe the transmigration, and that at death, the soul passes out of one body into another : when they excommunicate any person, they curse him publicly, and during the time this lasts, no Jew must come within two yards of him, which continues till he has performed penance, and a rabbin blesses him ; their confessions are general,
and

and only used in their devotions to God Almighty, and not to any priest.*

No. VI.

QUAKERS.

THEY made their first appearance in England, during the interregnum: They were so called in derision, from certain unusual tremblings, with which they were seized at their first meetings. Their founder was George Fox, a shoemaker, born at Drayton, in Leicestershire, who, as he worked at his trade,

* The History of the Jews, from the earliest times to the Babylonish captivity, such as their religion, laws, manners, and customs; grand festivals, Easter passover, the feast of tabernacles, new moons, sabbaths, expiation, vows, priests, courts of judicature, punishments, trades, manufactures, &c. &c. are treated of at large, in the third and fourth volumes of that elaborate work, entitled Universal History, comprised in twenty volumes.

trade, used to meditate much on the Scriptures: at length he began to see visions, and set up for a preacher. He proposed but few articles of faith, insisting chiefly on moral virtue, natural charity, the love of God, and a deep attention to the inward motions, and secret operations of the spirit. He required a plain simple worship, and a religion without ceremonies, making it a principal point to wait in profound silence, the directions of the Holy Spirit.

Quakers were at first guilty of some extravagances, but these wore off, and they settled into a regular body, professing great austerity of behaviour, a singular probity and uprightness in their dealings, a great frugality at their tables, and a remarkable plainness and simplicity in their dress.

The system of this religious sect is laid down by Robert Barclay, in a sensible well-wrote apology to King Charles II.

Their principal doctrines are, That God has given to all men, without exception, su-

G g

pernatural

pernatural light, which being obeyed, can save them ; and that this light is Christ, the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world : that the Scriptures were indeed given by inspiration, and are preferable to all the other writings in the world : but that they are no more than secondary rules of faith and practice, in subordination to the Light or Spirit of God, which is the primary rule ; that immediate revelation is not ceased, a measure of the spirit being given to every one : That all superstitions and ceremonies in religion, of mere human institution, ought to be laid aside : as also, in civil society, the saluting one another, by pulling off the hat, bowing, or the like ; and the saying *you* instead of *thou* to a single person : that men and women ought to be plain and grave in their apparel, sober and just in their whole conversation, and at a word in all their dealings ; and not to swear, or go to war, to fight in private quarrels, or even to bear any carnal weapons.

They also set aside the two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper ; admit no clergy

clergy among them, but any one, without distinction, who is of a sober life, and believes him or herself to be moved thereto by the spirit, is allowed to preach in their assemblies : and they hold it unlawful to pay tythes or church rates.

In short they are a quiet, inoffensive people, of exemplary morals, remarkably charitable, and friendly to each other, and have never yet been guilty of persecution, though they have had it in their power.

As to discipline and polity, the affairs of the community are managed in their assemblies, of which there are several kinds : as monthly, quarterly, yearly, second days meetings, and meetings of sufferings. The monthly and quarterly meetings are held in their respective counties, to which deputies are sent from the several particular meetings, and enquiry is made into the state of each meeting : who violate the laws of the community : who pay tythes or church rates, and who suffer for the non-payment.

From these meetings appeals lie to their yearly assemblies, which are always held in London. Hither are transmitted accounts of what has been transacted in all the monthly and quarterly meetings: Here measures are concerted, and directions given for their behaviour: Here they compose differences, and make provisions for the poor: Their public accounts are audited, and instructions given to the deputies, and other matters relative to the peace and good order of the society at large.

6 NO 61

No.

No. VII.

The True Protestant or Christian Religion.

WHICH is that instituted by Jesus Christ, and which I shall describe in the language of one of our most eminent divines of the church of England, no less distinguished for his piety than his learning. If (says he) we examine the nature and tendency of the religion itself, which was taught by Christ, and by the apostles in his name, we shall find it to be worthy of God. It retaineth all the excellencies of the Old Testament revelation; *for Our Saviour came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil them*, and carry the scheme of religion, there laid down, to a still higher degree of excellency. The idea given us of God, of his incomparable perfections,

3

and

and of his governing providence, as extending to all his creatures, particularly towards mankind, is the noblest that can be conceived, and the most proper to produce worthy affections and dispositions towards him. Great care is especially taken to instruct us to form just notions of God's illustrious moral excellencies, of his wisdom, his faithfulness and truth, his impartial justice and righteousness, and spotless purity : but above all, of his goodness and love to mankind, of which the Gospel contains and exhibits the most glorious and attractive discoveries and displays that were ever made to the world. The exceeding riches of the Divine Grace and Mercy, are represented in the most engaging manner. Pardon and salvation are freely offered upon the most gracious terms ; the very chief of sinners are invited, and the strongest possible assurances given of God's readiness to receive them, upon their sincere repentance and reformation : and at the same time, to prevent an abuse of this, the most striking representations are made of God's just wrath and displeasure, against those that obstinately go on in presumptuous sin and disobedience.

obedience. It is especially the glory of the Gospel, that the great realities of an unseen eternal world, are there set in the most clear and open light : there are clearer discoveries made, and far stronger assurances given of that future life and immortality, than were ever given to mankind before.

As to the precepts of Christianity, they are unquestionably holy and excellent. The purest morality is taught in all its just and noble extent, as taking in the whole of our duty towards God, our neighbour, and ourselves.

As to piety towards God, the idea there given of it, is venerable, amiable, and engaging ; we are required to fear God, but it is not with a servile horror, such as superstition inspires, but with a filial reverence. We are directed and encouraged to address ourselves to him as our heavenly father, through Jesus Christ the son of his love, and in his name to offer up our prayers and praises, our confessions and thanksgivings, with the profoundest humility, becoming creatures deeply

deeply sensible of their own unworthiness; and yet with an ingenious affiance, hope, and joy. We are to yield the most unreserved submission to God, as our sovereign lord, our most wise and gracious governor, and most righteous benefactor; and to resign ourselves to his disposal, and acquiesce in his providential dispensations, as being persuaded that he ordereth all things really for the best, to walk continually as in his sight, and with regard to his approbation, setting him before us, as our great all-seeing witness and judge, our chiefest good and highest end. Above all we are required to love the Lord our God, with all our heart, and mind, and strength, and to shew that we love him by keeping his commandments, which are not grievous, by aspiring after a conformity to him in his inimitable perfections, and by endeavouring, as far as we are able, to glorify him in the world.

As to the external worship of God, according to the idea given of it in the New Testament, it is pure and spiritual, and hath a noble simplicity in it. The numerous
rites

rites of the Mosaical dispensation, which though wisely suited to that time and state, were marks of the imperfection of that œconomy are now abolished. The ordinances of Christianity, as prescribed in the Gospel, are few in number, easy of observation, and noble in their use and significance.

Not only doth Christianity give the most excellent directions, as to the duty we more immediately owe to God, but great stress is there laid on all social duties, and social virtues, which it hath a manifest tendency to promote and improve. The constant exercise of justice, and righteousness, and fidelity, is most expressly enjoined: the rendering to all their dues, and a diligent discharge of the duties of our several stations and relations, is bound upon us, not merely as civil considerations, but as a necessary part of religion. But what ought especially to recommend Christianity, is, that a true and extensive benevolence is there carried to the noblest height; it strengthens the natural ties of humanity, and adds other sacred

H h

and

and most engaging ties, to bind us still more strongly to one another. We are taught to love our neighbours as ourselves, to rejoice in their happiness, and endeavour to promote it; to do good to all as far as we have opportunity; yea even to extend our benevolence to our enemies themselves, and to those who have injured us; and to be ready to render good for evil, and overcome evil with good. It tends to discountenance and suppress that malice and envy, hatred and revenge, those boisterous angry passions, and malevolent affections and dispositions which have done so much mischief in the world.

As to the exercise of self-government, christianity is manifestly designed to improve and perfect human nature. It teaches us not only to regulate the outward actions, but the inward affections and dispositions of the soul: to labour after real purity of heart, simplicity, and godly sincerity, as that, without which, no outward appearances can be pleasing in the sight of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. It strikes at the root of
all

all our disorders and corruptions, by obliging us to correct and regulate that inordinate self-love, which causes us to center all our views in our own pleasure, or glory, or interest, and by instructing us to mortify and subdue our sensual appetites and inclinations. It is designed to assert the dominion of the rational and moral powers, over the inferior part of our nature, of the spirit over the flesh, which alone can lay a just foundation for that moral liberty, and that tranquillity of mind, which it is the design of all true philosophy to procure and establish.

And whereas a too great love of the world, and its enjoyments, its riches, honours, or pleasures, is the source of numberless disorders in human life, and turns us astray in our whole course, it teaches us to rectify our false opinions of these things, and not to seek happiness in them, but to set our affections principally on things of a far higher and nobler nature, things celestial and eternal.

And with regard to the evils of this present life and world, it tendeth to inspire us
with

with the noblest fortitude, and to render us superior to those evils, as being fully and firmly persuaded that God will cause them to work together for our good. It provideth the best remedy, both against our cares and fears, especially against the fear of death itself.

F I N I S.

6 NO 61



INDEX.

A		PAGE			PAGE
R eligion of the Ammonites		13	Agnoites		388
Amalekites		24	Arminians		403
Antediluvians		41	Artotyrites		<i>ibid.</i>
Athenians		46	Antitactes		406
Assyrians		58	Arnoldists		407
Armenians		149			
Ancient Arabs,		192	B		
Adamites		258	Religion of the Babylonians		60
Abelians		268	—Ancient state of Britain		231
Adeffenarians		269	Banians		272
Aerians		270	Bardefanites		314
Angelites		276	Barfanians		374
Agynani		280	Barules		390
Albanenses		281	Bafilidians		<i>ibid.</i>
Actians		286	Berengarians		402
Albati		306	Bethlehemites		408
Anabaptists		307	Borrellists		412
Albigenses		310	Brachmans		422
Anaximandrians		367	Bourignonists		424
Anthropomorphites		368	Brownists		427
Antinomians		<i>ibid.</i>	Bulgarians		428
Aquarians		375	Baralotts		430
Arians		380	Beghardi		431

I N D E X.

C		PAGE			PAGE
Religion of the Canaanites		26	Religion of the Edomites		21
—— Ancient Celtes		124	—— Etruscans		159
—— Cappadocians		151	—— Ethiopians		184
—— Carthaginians		167	Ebionites		303
Ancient Chinese		248	Energumens		400
Cadari		261	Eunuchs		404
Canians		271	Eunomians		411
Condormientes		295	Eutychians		416
Cerinthians		324	Ethnophrones		425
Cataphryges		351		F	
Carpocratians		352			
Cameronians		354	Fratricelli		350
Calixtins		369	Free-thinker, vide Deists		440
Calvinists		370		G	
Colarbasians		381			
Canadians		<i>ibid.</i>	Religion of the Ancient State		
Cerdonians		385	of the Gauls		207
Catholic, vide Rom. Catholic		436	—— Ancient Germans		220
Christian Religion, vide	}	453	Gaurs		278
Protestant			Gnostics		301
	D			H	
Dositheans		262	Religion of the Ancient He-		
Davidists		263	ruli		236
Damianists		320	Certain Sects of Heretics		
Donatists		321	A. M. 110		332
Dulcinists		350	Heracleonites		426
Diffenters		439	Hieracites		428
Deists		440	Hugenots		429
	E			I and J	
Religion of the Egyptians		1	Religion of the Ancient		
			Ionians		146
			Indians		

I N D E X.

	PAGE		PAGE
Indians	241	Millenarians	413
Jesuits	377	Muggletonians	417
Independants	389	Methodists	432
Joachimites	394		
Infidel, vide Deist	440	N	
Jews	443	Religion of the Numidians	180
		Nazarenes	304
L		Nicholaitans	322
Religion of the Ancient		Noetians	373
Lydians	140	Novatians	415
——— Lacedemonians	143	Nestorians	420
Lutherans	309		
Libertines	349	O	
		Ophites	274
M		Origenists	283
Religion of the Moabites	9		
——— Midianites	17	P	
——— Medes	86	Religion of the Philistines	29
——— Myfians	138	——— Pagans	39
——— Mauritanians	182	——— Phœnicians	55
——— Moguls	238	——— Phrygians	77
Magi	214	——— Perfians	87
Mahometans	289	——— Parthians	157
Marcosians	319	Pietists	277
Menander	325	Patripaffians	318
Marcian	327	Papuzians	330
Moravians, vide Calixtins	369	Puritans	344
Manichees	386	Polygamists	345
Maffalians	393	Picards	ibid.
Marcionites	396	Pharisees	347
Melchizedechians	401	Predestinarians	370
Mennonites	405	Priscillianists	386
Monothelites	412	P	

I N D E X.

	PAGE		PAGE
Paulionists	399	Simonians	363
Pelagians	397	Savages in Canada	381
Paulicians	407	Semi-pelagians	399
Photinians	418	Sampseans	419
Presbyterian	370		
Protestant, or the true Chris- tian Religion	453		
		T	
Q		Religion of the ancient Tro- jans	84
Quietists	364	Thracians	134
Quintillians	356	Turks, Tartars, and Moguls	338
Quakers	448	Templers	396
		Tatianites	369
R		Turlupins	ibid.
Rechabites	367		
Remonstrants	342	U	
Rosycrucians	356	Unitarians	333
Roman Catholics	436	Ubiquitarians	409
S		V	
Religion of the ancient Sy- rians	47	Valentinians	395
Scythians	132		
of the ancient state		W	
of Spain	201	Wickliffites	361
Sabzeans	315	Whitfieldites, vide Metho- dists	432
Sabellians	317		
Secundians	328	Z	
Socinians	337	Zealots	375
Sadduces	342	Zindikites	335
Samaritans	357		

